# ספר יצירה׃

# SEPHER YEZIRAH.

## A BOOK ON CREATION;



OR,



## THE JEWISH METAPHYSICS

OF

## REMOTE ANTIQUITY.

With English Translation, Preface, Explanatory Notes and Glossary,

BY

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# PREFACE.

This metaphysical essay, called "Sepher Yezirah," (book on creation, or cosmogony,) which I have endeavored to render into English, with explanatory notes, is considered by all modern literati as the first philosophical book that ever was written in the Hebrew language. But the time of its composition and the name of its author have not yet been ascertained, despite of the most elaborate researches of renowned archaeologists. Some maintain that this essay is mentioned in the Talmud treatise Sanhedrin, p. 66 b. and ibid. 67 b. which passage is according to the commentary of Rashi, to treatise Erubin, p. 63 a., a reliable historical notice. Hence this book was known already in the second or at the beginning of the third century of the Christian Era. The historian, Dr. Graetz, tries to show very ingeniously in his work, entitled "Gnosticism," p. 104 and 110, that it was written in the early centuries of the Christian Church, especially when the ideas and views of the Gnostics were in vogue. This opinion, however, he afterwards revoked. (See Dr. Graetz's "History of the Jews," Vol. V, p. 315 in a note.)

Dr. Zunz, the Nestor of the Jewish Rabbis in Europe, maintains that we have to look for the genesis of the book "Yezirah" in the Geonic period, (700—1000), and that it was consequently composed in a post-talmudical time. But if so, it is very strange

that Saadjah Gaon, who lived in the tenth, and Judah Halevi, who lived in the twelfth century, represented the book "Yezirah" as a very ancient work. Therefore it seems to me, that Dr. Graetz had no sufficient cause to repudiate his assertion concerning the age of this book; because all the difficulties which he himself and others raised against his supposition, fall to the ground, when we consider that the most ancient works, holy as well as profane, had one and the same fate, namely, that from age to age more or less interpolations were made by copyists and commentators. Compare also Prof. Tenneman's "Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie," improved by Prof. Wendt, p. 207.

Tradition, which ascribes the authorship of this book to the patriarch Abraham, is fabulous, as can be proved by many reasons; but the idea that Rabbi Akiba, who lived about the beginning of the second century, composed the book "Yezirah," is very likely possible. Be this as it may, it is worth while to know the extravagant hypotheses which ancient Jewish philosophers and theologians framed as soon as they began to contemplate and to reason, endeavoring to combine oriental and Greek theories. Although there is an exuberance of weeds, we will find, nevertheless, many germs of truisms, which are of the greatest importance. A Christian theologian, Johann Friedrich von Meyer D. D., remarked very truly in his German preface to the book "Yezirah," published in Leipzig, 1830: "This book is for two reasons highly important: in the first place, that the real Cabala, or mystical

doctrine of the Jews, which must be carefully distinguished from its excrescences, is in close connection and perfect accord with the Old and New Testaments; and in the second place, that the knowledge of it is of great importance to the philosophical inquirers, and can not be put aside. Like a cloud permeated by beams of light which makes one infer that there is more light behind it, so do the contents of this book, enveloped in obscurity, abound in coruscations of thought, reveal to the mind that there is a still more effulgent light lurking somewhere, and thus inviting us to a further contemplation and investigation, and at the same time demonstrating the danger of a superficial investigation, which is so prevalent in modern times, rejecting that which can not be understood at first sight."

I shall now try to give a sketch of the system as it is displayed in the book "Yezirah," which forms a link in the chain of the ancient theoretical speculations of philosophers, who were striving to ascertain the truth mainly by reasoning a-priori, and who imagined that it is thus possible to permeate all the secrets of nature. It teaches that a first cause, eternal, all-wise, almighty and holy, is the origin and the centre of the whole universe, from whom gradually all beings emanated. Thought, speech and action are an inseparable unity in the divine being; God made or created, is metaphorically expressed by the word: writing. The Hebrew language and its characters correspond mostly with the things they designate, and thus holy thoughts, Hebrew language

and its reduction to writing, form a unity which produce a creative effect.*

The self-existing first cause called the creation into existence by quantity and quality; the former represented by ten numbers, (Sephiroth,) the latter by twenty-two letters, which form together thirty-two ways of the divine wisdom. Three of the twenty-two letters, namely, Aleph, Mem, Sheen, are the mothers, or the first elements, from which came forth the primitive matter of the world: air, water and fire, that have their parallel in man, (male and female): breast, body and head, and in the year: moisture, cold and heat. The other seven double and twelve‡ simple letters are then represented as stamina, from which other spheres or media of existence emanated.

Man is a microcosm, as the neck separates rationality from vitality, so does diaphragm the vitality from the vegetativeness.

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*Thus for instance, they imagined that the name of Jehovah, יהוה, is by reversing the alphabet; מצפין (mzpz); mem signifies the letter jod, zaddi, the letter he, and pe, the letter wav. These unmeaning sounds, they said, have magic power. Some maintained that the Hebrew language consists of twenty-two consonants, because being the complex of all beings, its number is equal to the most perfect figure, namely, of the periphery, as it is well known that the diameter is always to the periphery as seven to twenty-two.

‡It was frequently observed by Jewish and Christian theologians, that the Marcosianic Gnostic system, as well as that of the Clementinians of the second century, contain many analogies and parallels with the book "Yezirah." Marcus divides the Greek alphabet into three parts, namely: nine mute consonants ἀφωνα, eight half vowels ἡμιφωνα, and seven vowels φωνηεντα, in order to give a clear idea of the peculiar constitution of his "Aeons." (Irenaeus Haer, I, 16.)

God stands in close connection with the Universe, and just so is Tali connected with the world, that is, an invisible, celestial or universal axis carries the whole fabric. In the year by the sphere, in man by the heart, and thus is the ruling spirit of God everywhere. Notwithstanding the decay of the individual, the genus is produced by the antithesis of man and wife.

Hebrew commentaries on the book "Yezirah" were composed by: first, Saadjah Gaon, of Fajum in Egypt, (892—942); second, Rabbi Abraham ben Dior Halevi; third, Rabbi Moses ben Nachman; fourth, Elieser of Germisa; fifth, Moses Botarel; sixth, Rabbi Eliah Wilna. The book "Yezirah," together with all these commentaries, was published in 1860, in the city of Lemberg. But although the commentator Saadjah was a sober minded scholar in a superstitious age, a good Hebrew grammarian, a renowned theologian and a good translator of the Hebrew Pentateuch, Isaiah and Job into the Arabian language, his ideas and views were, nevertheless, very often much benighted. See his comments on Yez. Chap. I, etc., etc.; his notes on "Yezirah" Chap. III, 2, prove undoubtedly that he had no knowledge whatever of natural science, and therefore his annotations on the book "Yezirah" are of little or no use at all. All the other commentaries mentioned above, together with all quotations of other expounders of the same book, contain nothing but a medley of arbitrary, mystical explanations and sophistical distortions of scriptural verses, astrological notions, orient-

al superstitions, a metaphysical jargon, a poor knowledge of physics and not a correct elucidation of the ancient book; they drew mostly from their own imagination, and credited the author of "Yezirah" with saying very strange things which he never thought of. I must not omit to mention two other Hebrew commentaries, one by Judah Halevi, and the other by Ebn Ezra, who lived in the first part of the twelfth century. They succeeded in explaining the book "Yezirah in a sound scientific manner, but failed in making themselves generally understood, on account of the superstitious age in which they lived, and the tenacity with which the people in that period adhered to the marvelous and supernatural; they found, therefore, but few followers, and the book "Yezirah" remained to the public an enigma and an ancient curiosity, giving rise to a system of metaphysical delirium, called Cabala.

Translations of the book "Yezirah" and comments thereon by learned Christian authors are: first, a translation of the book "Yezirah" with explanatory notes in the Latin language, by Wilhelm Postellus, Paris, France, 1552; second, another Latin version is contained in Jo. Pistorii artis cabalistical scriptorum, Tom I, p. 869, sqq., differing from that of Postellus. Some are of the opinion that John Reuchlin, while others maintain that Paul Riccius was the author of it. (See Wolfii Biblioth. Hebr. Tom., I, Chap. 1.) Third, Rittangel published the book "Yezirah," 1642, at Amsterdam, entitled: "Liber Yezirah qui Abrahamo patriarchae adscribitur, una cum commentario

Rabbi Abraham F. D. (filii Dior) super 32 Semitis Sapientiae, a quibus liber Yezirah incipit. Translatus et notis illustratus, a Joanne Stephano Rittangelio, ling. Orient. in Elect. Acad. Regiomontana Prof. extraord. Amstelodami ap. Jo. and Jodoc. Janssonios," 1642, in quarto; fourth, Johann Friedrich von Mayer, D. D., published the book "Yezirah" in Hebrew with a translation and explanatory notes in the German language, Leipzig, 1830.

All these translations are out of print and are rarely found even in well regulated libraries. I was so fortunate as to obtain a copy of Dr. Mayer's edition of the book "Yezirah." He states in the preface to it, that he had a copy of Postellus' translation in manuscript as well as some others, and compared them. The explanatory notes given by this author are, nevertheless, insufficient and sometimes very incorrect. The present translation is, as far as I could ascertain, the first that was ever published in the English language. Again, I have to add that I have not only endeavored to correct a great many mistakes and erroneous ideas of my predecessors, but I have also endeavored to give more complete annotations. I therefore hope that the candid reader will consider the great difficulties I had to overcome in this still unbeaten way of the ancient Jewish spiritual region, and will receive with indulgence this new contribution to archaeological knowledge.

DR. ISIDOR KALISCH.

# ספר יצירה.

## פרק ראשון.

משנה א.

בִּשְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם נְתִיבוֹת פְּלִיאוֹת חָכְמָה חָקַק יָהּ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם אֵל שַׁדַּי רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן רָם וְנִשָּׂא שׁוֹכֵן עַד מָרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ וּבָרָא אֶת עוֹלָמוֹ בִּשְׁלֹשָׁה סְפָרִים *בִּסְפָר וּסְפוֹר וְסֵפֶר: עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה וְעֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת יְסוֹד: שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת וְשֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת וּשְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה פְּשׁוּטוֹת:

משנה ב.

עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה כְּמִסְפַּר עֶשֶׂר אֶצְבָּעוֹת חָמֵשׁ כְּנֶגֶד חָמֵשׁ וּבְרִית יָחִיד מְכֻוֶּנֶת בְּאֶמְצַע בְּמִלַּת הַלָּשׁוֹן וּבְמִלַּת הַמָּעוֹר:

משנה ג.

עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה עֶשֶׂר וְלֹא תֵשַׁע עֶשֶׂר וְלֹא אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה הָבֵן בְּחָכְמָה וַחֲכַם בְּבִינָה בָּחוֹן בָּהֶם וַחֲקוֹר מֵהֶם וְהַעֲמֵד דָּבָר עַל בּוּרְיוֹ וְהוֹשֵׁב יוֹצֵר עַל־מְכוֹנוֹ:

*נ״א. בְּסֵפֶר וְסוֹפֵר וְסִפּוּר:

# SEPHER YEZIRAH.

## CHAPTER I.

### SECTION 1.

Yah,[1] the Lord of hosts, the living God, King of the Universe, Omnipotent, All-Kind and Merciful, Supreme and Extolled, who is Eternal, Sublime and Most-Holy, ordained (formed) and created the Universe in thirty-two[2] mysterious paths[3] of wisdom by three[4] Sepharim, namely: 1) S'for סְפָר; 2) Sippur סִפּוּר; and 3) Sapher סָפֵר which are in Him one and the same. They consist of a decade out of nothing[5] and of twenty-two fundamental letters. He divided the twenty-two consonants into three divisions: 1) three אִמּוֹת mothers, fundamental letters or first elements; 2) seven double; and 3) twelve simple consonants.

### SECTION 2.

The decade[6] out of nothing is analogous to that of the ten fingers (and toes) of the human body, five parallel to five, and in the centre of which is the covenant with the only One, by the word of the tongue and the rite of Abraham.

### SECTION 3.

Ten are the numbers out of nothing, and not the number nine, ten and not eleven. Comprehend this great wisdom, understand this[7] knowledge, inquire into it and ponder on it, render it evident and lead[8] the Creator back to His throne again.

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1) See Notes commencing on Page 47.

## משנה ד.

עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה מִדָּתָן עֶשֶׂר שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם סוֹף עוֹמֶק רֵאשִׁית וְעוֹמֶק אַחֲרִית עוֹמֶק טוֹב וְעוֹמֶק רָע עוֹמֶק רוּם וְעוֹמֶק תַּחַת עוֹמֶק מִזְרַח וְעוֹמֶק מַעֲרָב עוֹמֶק צָפוֹן וְעוֹמֶק דָּרוֹם אָדוֹן יָחִיד אֵל מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָן מוֹשֵׁל בְּכֻלָּם מִמְּעוֹן קָדְשׁוֹ עַד עֲדֵי עַד:

## משנה ה.

עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה צְפִיָּיתָן כְּמַרְאֵה הַבָּזָק וְתַכְלִיתָן אֵין לָהֶן קֵץ דְּבָרוֹ בָּהֶן בְּרָצוֹא וָשׁוֹב וּלְמַאֲמָרוֹ כְּסוּפָה יִרְדּוֹפוּ וְלִפְנֵי כִסְאוֹ הֵם מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים:

## משנה ו.

עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה נָעוּץ סוֹפָן בִּתְחִלָּתָן וּתְחִלָּתָן בְּסוֹפָן כְּשַׁלְהֶבֶת קְשׁוּרָה* בְּגַחֶלֶת שֶׁאָדוֹן יָחִיד וְאֵין לוֹ שֵׁנִי וְלִפְנֵי אֶחָד מָה אַתָּה סוֹפֵר:

## משנה ז.

עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה בְּלוֹם פִּיךָ מִלְּדַבֵּר וְלִבְּךָ מִלְּהַרְהֵר וְאִם רָץ פִּיךָ לְדַבֵּר וְלִבְּךָ לְהַרְהֵר שׁוּב לְמָקוֹם שֶׁלְּכַךְ נֶאֱמַר וְהַחַיּוֹת רָצוֹא וָשׁוֹב וְעַל דָּבָר זֶה נִכְרַת בְּרִית:

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*) רַבֵּינוּ הָאיי גָאוֹן ז״ל כָּתַב בְּסֵפֶר הַקְּמִיצָה וז״ל כָּתַב בַּעַל סֵפֶר יְצִירָה כְּשַׁלְהֶבֶת שׁוּרָה בְּגַחֶלֶת:

### Section 4.

The decade out of nothing has the following ten infinitudes:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1) The beginning[9] infinite. | 6) The depth infinite. |
| 2) " end " | 7) " East " |
| 3) " good " | 8) " West " |
| 4) " evil[10] " | 9) " North " |
| 5) " height " | 10) " South " |

and the only Lord God, the faithful King, rules over all from His holy habitation for ever and ever.

### Section 5.

The appearance of the ten spheres out of nothing is like a flash of lightning, being without an end, His word is in them, when they go and return; they run by His order like a whirlwind and humble themselves before His throne.

### Section 6.

The decade of existence out of nothing has its end linked to its beginning and its beginning linked to its end, just as the flame is wedded to the live coal; because the Lord is one and there is not a second one, and before one what wilt thou count?[11]

### Section 7.

Concerning the number ten of the spheres of existence out of nothing keep thy tongue from speaking and thy mind from pondering on it, and if thy mouth urges thee to speak, and thy heart to think about it, return! as it reads: "And the living creatures ran and returned," (Ezekiel 6, 14.) and upon this[12] was the covenant made.

## משנה ח.

עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה אַחַת רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים בָּרוּךְ וּמְבוֹרָךְ שְׁמוֹ שֶׁל חַי הָעוֹלָמִים קוֹל וְרוּחַ וְדִבּוּר וְהוּא רוּחַ הַקּוֹדֶשׁ: שְׁתַּיִם רוּחַ מֵרוּחַ חָקַק וְחָצַב בָּהּ עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת יְסוֹד שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת וְשֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת וּשְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה פְּשׁוּטוֹת וְרוּחַ אַחַת מֵהֶן: שָׁלֹשׁ מַיִם מֵרוּחַ חָקַק וְחָצַב בָּהֶן (עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת) תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ רֶפֶשׁ וָטִיט חֲקָקָן כְּמִין עֲרוּגָה הִצִּיבָן* כְּמִין חוֹמָה סִבְּבָם‡ כְּמִין מַעֲזִיבָה (וַיָּצַק עֲלֵיהֶם שֶׁלֶג וְנַעֲשָׂה עָפָר שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר כִּי לַשֶּׁלֶג יֹאמַר הֱוֵא אָרֶץ): אַרְבַּע אֵשׁ מִמַּיִם חָקַק וְחָצַב בָּהּ כִּסֵּא הַכָּבוֹד שְׂרָפִים וְאוֹפַנִּים וְחַיּוֹת הַקּוֹדֶשׁ וּמַלְאֲכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת וּמִשְּׁלָשְׁתָּן יָסַד מְעוֹנוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר עוֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת מְשָׁרְתָיו אֵשׁ לוֹהֵט בֵּירַר שְׁלֹשָׁה אוֹתִיּוֹת מִן הַפְּשׁוּטוֹת בְּסוֹד שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֱ״מֶ״שׁ‖ וְקָבְעָם בִּשְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל וְחָתַם בָּהֶם שֵׁשׁ קְצָווֹת:

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*) נוסחא אחרינא: חָצְבָן:

‡) נ״א סִיבְּבָן:

‖) יֵשׁ הוֹסִיפוּ: חָתַם רוּחַ בְּעַד שָׁלֹשׁ:

## Section 8.

The following are the ten categories of existence out of nothing:

1) The spirit of the living God, praised and glorified be the name of Him who lives to all eternity. The articulate word of creative power, the spirit and the word are what we call the holy spirit.[13]

2) Air emanated from the spirit by which He formed and established twenty-two consonants, stamina. Three of them, however, are fundamental letters, or mothers, seven double and twelve simple consonants; hence the spirit is the first one.

3) Primitive water emanated from the air. He formed and established by it Bohu[14] (water, stones) mud and loam, made them like a bed, put them up like a wall, and surrounded them as with a rampart, put coldness upon them and they became dust, as it reads: "He says to the snow (coldness) be thou earth." (Job 37, 6.)

4) Fire or ether emanated from the water. He established by it the throne of glory, the Seraphim and Ophanim, the holy living creatures and the angels, and of these three He formed His habitation, as it reads: "Who made His angels spirits, His ministers a flaming fire." (Psalm 104, 4.) He selected three consonants from the simple ones which are in the hidden secret of three mothers or first elements: א"מ"ש, air, water and ether or fire. He sealed them with spirit and fastened them to His great name and sealed with it six dimensions.[15]

חָמֵשׁ חָתַם רוּם וּפָנָה לְמַעְלָה וְחָתְמוֹ ביהו
שֵׁשׁ חָתַם תַּחַת וּפָנָה לְמַטָּה וְחָתְמוֹ בהיו
שֶׁבַע חָתַם מִזְרָח וּפָנָה לְפָנָיו וְחָתְמוֹ בויה
שְׁמוֹנָה חָתַם מַעֲרָב וּפָנָה לְאַחֲרָיו וְחָתְמוֹ בוהי
תֵּשַׁע חָתַם דָּרוֹם וּפָנָה לִימִינוֹ וְחָתְמוֹ ביוה
עֶשֶׂר חָתַם צָפוֹן וּפָנָה לִשְׂמֹאלוֹ וְחָתְמוֹ בהוי

### משנה ט.

אֵלּוּ עֶשֶׂר סְפִירוֹת בְּלִימָה אַחַת רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים רוּחַ מֵרוּחַ מַיִם מֵרוּחַ אֵשׁ מִמַּיִם רוּם וְתַחַת מִזְרָח וּמַעֲרָב צָפוֹן וְדָרוֹם:

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## פרק שני.

### משנה א.

עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת יְסוֹד שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת וְשֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת וּשְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה פְּשׁוּטוֹת שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ יְסוֹדָן כַּף זְכוּת וְכַף חוֹבָה וְלָשׁוֹן חָק מַכְרִיעַ בִּנְתַּיִם שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ מ׳ דוֹמֶמֶת שׁ׳ שׁוֹרֶקֶת א׳ אֲוִיר רוּחַ מַכְרִיעַ בִּנְתַּיִם:

### משנה ב.

עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת יְסוֹד חָקְקָן חָצְבָן צָרְפָן

5) He sealed[16] the height and turned towards above, and sealed it with יהו

6) He sealed the depth, turned towards below and sealed it with היו

7) He sealed the east and turned forward, and sealed it with ויה

8) He sealed the west and turned backward, and sealed it with והי

9) He sealed the south and turned to the right and sealed it with יוה

10) He sealed the north and turned to the left and sealed it with הוי

### Section 9.

These are the ten spheres of existence out of nothing. From the spirit of the living God emanated air, from the air, water, from the water, fire or ether, from the ether, the height and the depth, the East and West, the North and South.

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## CHAPTER II.

### Section 1.

There are twenty-two letters, stamina. Three of them, however, are the first elements, fundamentals or mothers, seven double and twelve simple consonants. The three fundamental letters א״מ״ש have as their basis the balance. In one scale[17] is the merit and in the other criminality, which are placed in equilibrium by the tongue. The three fundamental letters א״מ״ש signify, as מ is mute like the water and ש hissing like the fire, there is א among them, a breath of air which reconciles them.

### Section 2.

The twenty-two letters which form the stamina

שֶׁקְּלָן וְהֵמִירָן וְצָר בָּהֶם אֶת כָּל הַיְּצוּר וְאֶת כָּל הֶעָתִיד לָצוּר:

משנה ג.

עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת יְסוֹד חָקְקָן בְּקוֹל חָצְבָן בְּרוּחַ קָבְעָן בְּפֶה בְּחָמֵשׁ מְקוֹמוֹת אוֹתִיּוֹת אֲהַחַ״ע בְּגָרוֹן גִּיכַ״ק בְּחֵיךְ דַּטְלְנַ״ת בְּלָשׁוֹן וְשַׁסְרָ״ץ בְּשִׁנַּיִם בּוּמָ״ף בִּשְׂפָתַיִם:

משנה ד.

עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת יְסוֹד קְבָעָן בְּגַלְגַּל כְּמִין חוֹמָה בְּרל״א שְׁעָרִים וְחוֹזֵר הַגַּלְגַּלִּים פָּנִים וְאָחוֹר וְסִימָן לְדָבָר אֵין בְּטוֹבָה לְמַעְלָה מֵעֹנֶג וְאֵין בְּרָעָה לְמַטָּה מִנֶּגַע:

משנה ה.

כֵּיצַד צְרָפָן שְׁקָלָן וְהֵמִירָן א עִם כֻּלָּן וְכֻלָּן עִם א ב עִם כֻּלָּן וְכֻלָּן עִם ב וְחוֹזְרוֹת חָלִילָה וְנִמְצָאוֹת בְּרל״א שְׁעָרִים וְנִמְצָא כָל הַיְּצוּר וְכָל הַדִּבּוּר יוֹצֵא מִשֵּׁם* אֶחָד:

משנה ו.

יָצַר מַמָּשׁ מִתֹּהוּ וְעָשָׂה אֶת אֵינוֹ יֶשְׁנוֹ וְחָצַב עַמּוּדִים גְּדוֹלִים מֵאֲוִיר שֶׁאֵינוֹ נִתְפָּס וְזֶה סִימָן אוֹת

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*) נ״א בְּשֵׁם:

after having been appointed and established by God, He combined, weighed and changed them, and formed by them all beings which are in existence, and all those which will be formed in all time to come.

### SECTION 3.

He established twenty-two letters, stamina, by the voice, formed by the breath of air and fixed them on five places in the human mouth, namely: 1) gutturals, אהחע 2) palatals, גיכק 3) linguals, דטלנת 4) dentals, זשסרץ 5) labials, בומף

### SECTION 4.

He fixed the twenty-two letters, stamina, on the sphere like a wall with two hundred and thirty-one gates,[18] and turned the spheres forward and backward. For an illustration may serve the three letters, ענג There is nothing better than joy, and nothing worse than sorrow or plague.[19]

### SECTION 5.

But how was it done? He combined,[20] weighed and changed: the א with all the other letters in succession, and all the others again with א; ב with all, and all again with ב; and so the whole series of letters.[21] Hence it follows that there are two hundred and thirty-one[22] formations, and that every creature and every word emanated from one name.[23]

### SECTION 6.

He created a reality out of nothing, called the nonentity into existence and hewed, as it were, colossal pillars from intangible air. This has been shown by the example of combining the letter א with

א עִם כֻּלָּן וְכֻלָּן עִם א צוֹפֶה וּמֵימַר וְעָשָׂה אֶת כָּל הַיְּצוּר וְאֶת כָּל הַדִּבּוּר שֵׁם אֶחָד וְסִימָן לְדָבָר עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם חֲפֵצִים בְּגוּף א:

## פרק שלישי.

### משנה א.

שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ יְסוֹדָן כַּף זְכוּת וְכַף חוֹבָה וְלָשׁוֹן חָק מַכְרִיעַ בְּנְתַּיִם שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ סוֹד גָדוֹל מוּפְלָא וּמְכוּסֶה וְחָתוּם בְּשֵׁשׁ טַבָּעוֹת וְיָצְאוּ* מֵהֶם אֲוִיר וּמַיִם וְאֵשׁ וּמֵהֶם נוֹלְדוּ אָבוֹת וּמֵאָבוֹת תּוֹלְדוֹת:

### משנה ב.

שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ חָקְקָן חָצְבָן צְרָפָן שָׁקְלָן וְהֵמִירָן וְצָר בָּהֶם שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ בָּעוֹלָם וְשָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ בְּשָׁנָה וְשָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

### משנה ג.

שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ בָּעוֹלָם אֲוִיר וּמַיִם וְאֵשׁ שָׁמַיִם נִבְרְאוּ מֵאֵשׁ וְאֶרֶץ נִבְרֵאת מִמַּיִם וַאֲוִיר מֵרוּחַ מַכְרִיעַ בְּנְתַּיִם:

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*) נ״א וּמִמֶּנּוּ יוֹצְאִים אֵשׁ וּמַיִם וּמִתְחַלְּקִים זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ יְסוֹדָן וּמֵהֶן נוֹלְדוּ אָבוֹת שֶׁמִּמֶּנּוּ נִבְרָא הַכֹּל:

all the other letters, and all the other letters with Aleph (א). He[24] predetermined, and by speaking created every creature and every word by one name. For an illustration may serve the twenty-two elementary substances by the primitive substance of Aleph[25] (א).

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## CHAPTER III.

### Section 1.

The three first elements, א״מ״ש are typified by a balance, in one scale the merit and in the other the criminality, which are placed in equilibrium by the tongue. These three mothers, א״מ״ש are a great, wonderful and unknown mystery, and are sealed by six[26] rings, or elementary circles, namely: air, water and fire emanated from them, which gave birth to progenitors, and these progenitors gave birth again to some offspring.

### Section 2.

God appointed and established the three mothers א״מ״ש, combined, weighed and changed them, and formed by them three mothers א״מ״ש in the world, in the year and in man, male and female.

### Section 3.

The three mothers א״מ״ש in the world are: air, water and fire. Heaven was created from fire or ether; the earth (comprising sea and land) from the elementary water; and the atmospheric air from the elementary air, or spirit, which establishes the balance among them.

משנה ד.

שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״ש בַּשָּׁנָה חוֹם וְקוֹר וּרְוָיָה חוֹם נִבְרָא מֵאֵשׁ קוֹר נִבְרָא מִמַּיִם וּרְוָיָה מֵרוּחַ מַכְרִיעַ בִּנְתַיִם:

משנה ה.

שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״ש בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה רֹאשׁ וּבֶטֶן וּגְוִיָּה רֹאשׁ נִבְרָא מֵאֵשׁ וּבֶטֶן נִבְרָא מִמַּיִם וּגְוִיָּה מֵרוּחַ מַכְרִיעַ בִּנְתַיִם:

משנה ו.

בָּבָא א. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת א׳ בְּרוּחַ וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם אֲוִיר בָּעוֹלָם רְוָיָה בְּשָׁנָה גְּוִיָּה בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר בְּאֶ״מֶ״ש וּנְקֵבָה בְּאָ״שָׁ״ם:

משנה ז.

בָּבָא ב. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת מ׳ בְּמַיִם וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם אֶרֶץ בָּעוֹלָם וְקוֹר בַּשָּׁנָה וּבֶטֶן בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר בְּאֶ״מֶ״ש* וּנְקֵבָה בְּמַ״שָׁ״א:

משנה ח.

בָּבָא ג. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ש׳ בְּאֵשׁ וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם שָׁמַיִם בָּעוֹלָם וְחוֹם בְּשָׁנָה וְרֹאשׁ בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

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*) נ״א בְּמֵ״אֵ״שׁ:

## Section 4.

The three mothers א״מ״ש produce in the year[27]: heat, coldness[28] and moistness. Heat was created from fire, coldness from water, and moistness from air which equalizes them.

## Section 5.

The three mothers א״מ״ש produce in man, male and female, breast, body and head. The head was created from fire, the breast from water, and the body from air, which places them in equilibrium.

## Section 6.

First Division. God let the letter Aleph (א) predominate in primitive air, crowned[29] it, combined one with the other,[30] and formed by them the air in the world, moistness in the year, and the breast in man, male and female; in male by א״מ״ש and in female by א״ש״ם:

## Section 7.

Second Division. He let the letter Mem (מ) predominate in primitive water, and crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them the earth, (including land and sea) coldness in the year, and the belly in male and female; in male by א״מ״ש,[31] in female by מ״ש״א:

## Section 8.

Third Division. He let the letter Sheen (ש) predominate in primitive fire, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them, heaven in the world, heat in the year, and the head of male and female.[32]

# פרק רביעי.

## משנה א.

שֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת בְּגַ״ד כַּפְרַ״ת מִתְנַהֲגוֹת בִּשְׁתֵּי לְשׁוֹנוֹת בּ״ב ג״ג ד״ד כּ״כ פּ״פ ר״ר תּ״ת תַּבְנִית רַךְ וְקָשֶׁה גִּבּוֹר וְחַלָּשׁ:

## משנה ב.

שֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת בְּגַ״ד כַּפְרַ״ת יְסוֹדָן חָכְמָה וְעוֹשֶׁר וָזֶרַע וְחַיִּים וּמֶמְשָׁלָה שָׁלוֹם וְחֵן:

## משנה ג.

שֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת בְּגַ״ד כַּפְרַ״ת בְּדִבּוּר וּבִתְמוּרָה תְּמוּרַת חָכְמָה אִוֶּלֶת תְּמוּרַת עֹשֶׁר עוֹנִי תְּמוּרַת זֶרַע שְׁמָמָה תְּמוּרַת חַיִּים מָוֶת תְּמוּרַת מֶמְשָׁלָה עַבְדוּת תְּמוּרַת שָׁלוֹם מִלְחָמָה תְּמוּרַת חֵן כִּיעוּר:

## משנה ד.

שֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת בְּגַ״ד כַּפְרַ״ת מַעְלָה וּמַטָּה מִזְרָח וּמַעֲרָב צָפוֹן וְדָרוֹם וְהֵיכַל הַקּוֹדֶשׁ מְכֻוָּן בְּאֶמְצַע וְהוּא נוֹשֵׂא אֶת כֻּלָּן:

## משנה ה.

שֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת בְּגַ״ד כַּפְרַ״ת שִׁבְעָה וְלֹא שִׁשָּׁה

# CHAPTER IV.

## SECTION 1.

The[33] seven double letters, בגד כפרת with a duplicity of pronunciation, aspirated and unaspirated, namely: בבּ, גגּ, דדּ, ככּ, פפּ, ררּ, תתּ, serve as a model of softness and hardness, strength and weakness.

## SECTION 2.

Seven[34] double letters, בגד כפרת, shall, as it were, symbolize wisdom, wealth, fruitfulness, life, dominion, peace and beauty.

## SECTION 3.

Seven double letters serve to signify the antithesis to which human life is exposed. The antithesis of wisdom is foolishness; of wealth, poverty; of fruitfulness, childlessness; of life, death; of dominion, dependence; of peace, war; and of beauty, ugliness.

## SECTION 4.

The seven double consonants are analogous to the six dimensions: height and depth, East and West, North and South, and the holy temple that stands in the centre, which carries them all.

## SECTION 5.

The double consonants are seven, בגד כפרת and not six, they are seven and not eight; reflect upon this

שִׁבְעָה וְלֹא שְׁמוֹנָה בְּחוֹן בָּהֶם וַחֲקוֹר בָּהֶם וְהַעֲמֵד דָּבָר עַל בּוֹרְיוֹ וְהוֹשֵׁב יוֹצֵר עַל מְכוֹנוֹ:

משנה ו.

שֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת בְּגַ"ד כַּפְרַ"ת יְסוֹד חָקְקָן חָצְבָן צָרְפָן שָׁקְלָן וְהֵמִירָן וְצָר בָּהֶם שִׁבְעָה כּוֹכָבִים בָּעוֹלָם שִׁבְעָה יָמִים בְּשָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה שְׁעָרִים בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה ז.

שִׁבְעָה כּוֹכָבִים בָּעוֹלָם שַׁבְּתַי צֶדֶק מַאֲדִים חַמָּה נֹגַהּ כּוֹכָב לְבָנָה שִׁבְעָה יָמִים בְּשָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה יְמֵי הַשָּׁבוּעַ שִׁבְעָה שְׁעָרִים בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה שְׁתֵּי עֵינַיִם שְׁתֵּי אָזְנַיִם שְׁנֵי נַקְבֵי הָאַף וְהַפֶּה:

משנה ח.

בָּבָא א. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ב׳ בְּחָכְמָה וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וּצְרָפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם לְבָנָה בָּעוֹלָם יוֹם רִאשׁוֹן בְּשָׁנָה וְעַיִן יָמִין בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה ט.

בָּבָא ב. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ג׳ בְּעוֹשֶׁר וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וּצְרָפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם מַאֲדִים בָּעוֹלָם יוֹם שֵׁנִי בְּשָׁנָה וְאֹזֶן יָמִין בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

fact, inquire about it, and make it so evident, that[35] the Creator be acknowledged to be on His throne again.

### SECTION 6.

The seven double consonants, stamina, having been designed and established, combined, weighed, and changed by God, He formed by them: seven planets in the world, seven days in the year, seven gates, openings of the senses, in man, male and female.

### SECTION 7.

The seven planets in the world are:[36] Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon. Seven days in the year are the seven days of the week; seven gates in man, male and female, are: two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and the mouth.

### SECTION 8.

FIRST DIVISION. He let the letter ב predominate in wisdom, crowned it, combined one with the other and formed by them: the moon in the world, the first day in the year, and the right eye in man, male and female.

### SECTION 9.

SECOND DIVISION. He let the letter ג predominate in wealth, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Mars in the world, the second day in the year, and the right ear in man, male and female.

משנה י.

בָּבָא ג. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ד׳ בִּזְרוֹעַ וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וּצְרָפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם חַמָּה בָּעוֹלָם יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי בְּשָׁנָה וּנְחִיר יָמִין בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה י״א.

בָּבָא ד. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת כ׳ בְּחַיִּים וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וּצְרָפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם נוֹגַהּ בָּעוֹלָם יוֹם רְבִיעִי בְּשָׁנָה וְעַיִן שְׂמֹאל בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה י״ב.

בָּבָא ה. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת פ׳ בְּמֶמְשָׁלָה וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וּצְרָפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם כּוֹכָב בָּעוֹלָם יוֹם חֲמִישִׁי בְּשָׁנָה וְאֹזֶן שְׂמֹאל בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה י״ג.

בָּבָא ו. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ר׳ בְּשָׁלוֹם וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וּצְרָפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם שַׁבְּתַי בָּעוֹלָם יוֹם שִׁשִּׁי בְּשָׁנָה וּנְחִיר שְׂמֹאל בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה י״ד.

בָּבָא ז. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ת׳ בְּחֵן וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וּצְרָפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם צֶדֶק בָּעוֹלָם יוֹם שַׁבָּת בְּשָׁנָה וּפֶה בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

### Section 10.

Third Division. He let the letter ד predominate in producibility, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: the sun in the world, the third day in the year, the right nostril in man, male and female.

### Section 11.

Fourth Division. He let the letter כ predominate in life, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Venus in the world, the fourth day in the year, and the left eye in man, male and female.

### Section 12.

Fifth Division. He let the letter פ predominate in dominion, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Mercury in the world, the fifth day in the year, and the left ear in man, male and female.

### Section 13.

Sixth Division. He let the letter ר predominate in peace, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Saturn in the world, the sixth day in the year, and the left nostril in man, male and female.

### Section 14.

Seventh Division. He let the letter ת predominate in beauty, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Jupiter in the world, the seventh day in the year, and the mouth of man, male and female.

### משנה ט"ו.

שֶׁבַע כְּפוּלוֹת בְּגַ"ד כַּפְרַ"ת שֶׁבָּהֶן נֶחְקְקִין שִׁבְעָה עוֹלָמוֹת שִׁבְעָה רְקִיעִין שִׁבְעָה אֲרָצוֹת שִׁבְעָה יַמִּים שִׁבְעָה נְהָרוֹת שִׁבְעָה מִדְבָּרוֹת שִׁבְעָה יָמִים שִׁבְעָה שָׁבוּעוֹת שִׁבְעָה שָׁנִים שִׁבְעָה שְׁמִיטִּין שִׁבְעָה יוֹבְלוֹת לְפִיכָךְ חִבֵּב אֶת הַשְּׁבִיעִיּוֹת תַּחַת כָּל הַשָּׁמָיִם:

### משנה ט"ז.

שְׁתֵּי אֲבָנִים בּוֹנוֹת שְׁנֵי בָתִּים שָׁלֹשׁ אֲבָנִים בּוֹנוֹת שִׁשָּׁה בָתִּים אַרְבַּע אֲבָנִים בּוֹנוֹת אַרְבָּעָה וְעֶשְׂרִים בָּתִּים חָמֵשׁ אֲבָנִים בּוֹנוֹת מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים בָּתִּים שֵׁשׁ אֲבָנִים בּוֹנוֹת שְׁבַע מֵאוֹת וְעֶשְׂרִים בָּתִּים שֶׁבַע אֲבָנִים בּוֹנוֹת חֲמֵשֶׁת אֲלָפִים (וארבע) וְאַרְבָּעִים בָּתִּים מִכַּאן וְאֵילָךְ צֵא וַחֲשׁוֹב מַה שֶׁאֵין הַפֶּה יְכוֹלָה לְדַבֵּר וְאֵין הָאֹזֶן יְכוֹלָה לִשְׁמוֹעַ:

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## פרק חמישי.

### משנה א.

שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה פְּשׁוּטוֹת הו"ז חט"י לנ"ס עצ"ק

### Section 15.

By the seven double consonants, בגד כפרת were also designed seven worlds (αἰῶνες), seven heavens, seven lands, (probably climates,) seven seas, (probably around Palestine,) seven rivers, seven deserts, seven days a week, seven weeks from Passover to Pentecost, there is a cycle of seven years, the seventh is the release year, and after seven release years is jubilee. Hence, God loves the number seven under the whole heaven.[87] (In the whole nature.)

### Section 16.

Two stones build two houses, three stones build six houses, four build twenty-four houses, five build one hundred and twenty houses, six build seven hundred and twenty houses and seven build five thousand and forty[38] houses. From thence further go and reckon what the mouth cannot express and the ear cannot hear.

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## CHAPTER V.

### Section 1.

The twelve simple letters ה״ו״ז ח״ט״י ל״נ״ס ע״צ״ק symbolize, as it were, the organs of speaking, think-

יְסוֹדָן שִׂיחָה הִרְהוּר הִלּוּךְ רְאִיָּה שְׁמִיעָה מַעֲשֶׂה תַּשְׁמִישׁ רֵיחַ שֵׁינָה רוֹגֶז לְעִיטָה שְׂחוֹק:

## משנה ב.

שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה פְּשׁוּטוֹת הו״ז חט״י לנ״ס עצ״ק יְסוֹדָן שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר גְּבוּלֵי אֲלַכְסוֹן גְּבוּל מִזְרָחִית רוּמִית גְּבוּל מִזְרָחִית צְפוֹנִית גְּבוּל מִזְרָחִית תַּחְתִּית גְּבוּל דְּרוֹמִית רוּמִית גְּבוּל דְּרוֹמִית מִזְרָחִית גְּבוּל דְּרוֹמִית תַּחְתִּית גְּבוּל מַעֲרָבִית רוּמִית גְּבוּל מַעֲרָבִית דְּרוֹמִית גְּבוּל מַעֲרָבִית תַּחְתִּית גְּבוּל צְפוֹנִית רוּמִית גְּבוּל צְפוֹנִית מַעֲרָבִית גְּבוּל צְפוֹנִית תַּחְתִּית וּמִתְרַחֲבִין וְהוֹלְכִין עַד עֲדֵי עַד וְהֵן הֵין גְּבוּלוֹת עוֹלָם:

## משנה ג.

שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה פְּשׁוּטוֹת הו״ז חט״י לנ״ס עצ״ק יְסוֹדָן חָקְקָן חָצְבָן צָרְפָן שְׁקָלָן וְהֵמִירָן וְצָר בָּהֶם שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה מַזָּלוֹת בָּעוֹלָם שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֳדָשִׁים בְּשָׁנָה שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר מַנְהִיגִים בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

## משנה ד.

שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה מַזָּלוֹת בָּעוֹלָם טָלֶה שׁוֹר תְּאוֹמִים

ing, walking, seeing, hearing, working, coition, smelling, sleep, anger, swallowing and laughing.

### Section 2.

The twelve simple consonants ה"ו"ז ח"ט"י ל"נ"ס ע"צ"ק symbolize also twelve oblique points: east height, north east, east depth, south height, south east, south depth, west height, south west, west depth, north height, north west, north depth. They grew wider and wider to all eternity, and these are the boundaries of the world.

### Section 3.

The twelve simple letters ה"ו"ז ח"ט"י ל"נ"ס ע"צ"ק stamina, having been designed, established, combined, weighed and changed by God, He performed by them: twelve constellations in the world, twelve months in the year, and twelve leaders (organs) in the human body, male and female.

### Section 4.

The twelve constellations in the world are: Aries,

סַרְטָן אַרְיֵה בְתוּלָה מֹאזְנַיִם עַקְרָב קֶשֶׁת גְּדִי דְלִי דָגִים: שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֳדָשִׁים בְּשָׁנָה נִיסָן אִיָּר סִיוָן תַּמּוּז אָב אֱלוּל תִּשְׁרִי חֶשְׁוָן כִּסְלֵו טֵבֵת שְׁבָט אֲדָר: שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר מַנְהִיגִים בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה שְׁתֵּי יָדַיִם שְׁתֵּי רַגְלַיִם שְׁתֵּי כְלָיוֹת מָרָה דַקִּין כָּבֵד (קורקבן) גַּרְגֶּרֶת קֵבָה טָחוֹל:

## משנה ה.

בָּבָא א׳ מֵהָא. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ה׳ בְּשִׂיחָה וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם טָלֶה בְּעוֹלָם וְנִיסָן בְּשָׁנָה וְרֶגֶל יָמִין בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

## משנה ו.

בָּבָא ב׳ מֵהָא. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ו׳ בְּהִרְהוּר וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם שׁוֹר בְּעוֹלָם וְאִיָּר בְּשָׁנָה וְכוּלְיָא יְמָנִית בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

## משנה ז.

בָּבָא ג׳ מֵהָא. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ז׳ בְּהִלּוּךְ וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם תְּאוֹמִים בְּעוֹלָם וְסִיוָן בְּשָׁנָה וְרֶגֶל שְׂמֹאל בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagitarius, Capricornus, Aquarius and Pisces. The twelve months of the year are: Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, Tamus, Ab, Elul, Tishri, Marcheshvan, Kislev, Teves, Schevat and Adar. The twelve organs of the human body are: two hands, two feet, two kidneys, gall, small intestines, liver, gullet[39] or esophagus, stomach and milt.

### Section 5.

*First Part.*

First Division. God let the letter ה predominate in speaking, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Aries (the Ram) in the world, the month Nisan in the year, and the right foot of the human body, male and female.

### Section 6.

Second Division. He let the letter ו predominate in thinking, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Taurus (the Bull) in the world, the month Iyar in the year and the right kidney of the human body, male and female.

### Section 7.

Third Division. He let the letter ז predominate in walking, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Gemini (the Twins) in the world, the month Sivan in the year, and the left foot of the human body, male and female.

### משנה ח.

בָּבָא א׳ מִן הַשְּׁנִיָּה. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ח׳ בִּרְאִיָּה וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם סַרְטָן בְּעוֹלָם וְתַמּוּז בְּשָׁנָה וְיַד יָמִין בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

### משנה ט.

בָּבָא ב׳ מִן הַשְּׁנִיָּה. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ט׳ בִּשְׁמִיעָה וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם אַרְיֵה בְּעוֹלָם וְאָב בְּשָׁנָה וְכוּלְיָא שְׂמָאלִית בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

### משנה י.

בָּבָא ג׳ מִן הַשְּׁנִיָּה. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת י׳ בְּמַעֲשֶׂה וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם בְּתוּלָה בְּעוֹלָם וֶאֱלוּל בְּשָׁנָה וְיַד שְׂמֹאל בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

### משנה י״א.

בָּבָא א׳ מִן הַשְּׁלִישִׁית. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת ל׳ בְּתַשְׁמִישׁ וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם מאֹזְנַיִם בְּעוֹלָם וְתִשְׁרִי בְּשָׁנָה וּמָרָה בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

### משנה י״ב.

בָּבָא ב׳ מִן הַשְּׁלִישִׁית. הִמְלִיךְ אוֹת נ׳ בְּרֵיחַ וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצָרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם עַקְרָב בְּעוֹלָם וּמַרְחֶשְׁוָן בְּשָׁנָה וְדַקִּין בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

SECTION 8.

*Second Part.*

FIRST DIVISION. He let the letter ח predominate in seeing, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Cancer (the Crab) in the world, the month Tamus in the year, and the right hand of the human body, male and female.

SECTION 9.

SECOND DIVISION. He let the letter ט predominate in hearing, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Leo (the Lion) in the world, the month Ab in the year, and the left kidney of the human body, male and female.

SECTION 10.

THIRD DIVISION. He let the letter י predominate in working, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Virgo (the Virgin) in the world, the month Elul in the year, and the left hand of the human body, male and female.

SECTION 11.

*Third Part.*

FIRST DIVISION. He let the letter ל predominate in coition, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Libra (the Balance) in the world, the month Tishri in the year, and the gall of the human body, male and female.

SECTION 12.

SECOND DIVISION. He let the letter נ predominate in smelling, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Scorpio (the Scorpion) in the world, the month Marcheshvan in the year, and the small intestines of the human body, male and female.

משנה י"ג.

בָּבָא ג׳ מִן הַשְּׁלִישִׁית. הִמְלִיךְ אות ס׳ כְּשֵׁנָה וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצִרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם קֶשֶׁת בְּעוֹלָם וְכִסְלֵו בְּשָׁנָה וְקֵיבָה בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה י"ד.

בָּבָא א׳ מִן הָרְבִיעִית. הִמְלִיךְ אות ע׳ בְּרוֹגֶז וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצִרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם גְּדִי בְּעוֹלָם טֵבֵת בְּשָׁנָה וְכָבֵד בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה ט"ו.

בָּבָא ב׳ מִן הָרְבִיעִית. הִמְלִיךְ אות צ׳ בִּלְעִיטָה וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצִרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם דְּלִי בְּעוֹלָם וּשְׁבָט בְּשָׁנָה (וְקוּרְקְבָן) וְגַרְגֶּרֶת בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה:

משנה ט"ז.

בָּבָא ג׳ מִן הָרְבִיעִית. הִמְלִיךְ אות ק׳ בִּשְׂחוֹק וְקָשַׁר לוֹ כֶּתֶר וְצִרְפָן זֶה בָּזֶה וְצָר בָּהֶם דָּגִים בְּעוֹלָם וַאֲדָר בְּשָׁנָה וּטְחוֹל בְּנֶפֶשׁ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה עָשְׂאָן כְּמִין עֲרֵיבָה* סִידְרָן כְּמִין חוֹמָה עָרְכָן כְּמִין מִלְחָמָה:

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*) נ"א מְרִיבָה או מְדִינָה:

SECTION 13.

THIRD DIVISION. He let the letter ס predominate in sleep, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Sagittarius (the Archer) in the world, the month Kislev in the year, and the stomach of the human body, male and female.

SECTION 14.

*Fourth Part.*

FIRST DIVISION. He let the letter ע predominate in anger, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Capricornus (the Goat) in the world, the month Teves in the year, and the liver in the human body, male and female.

SECTION 15.

SECOND DIVISION. He let the letter צ predominate in swallowing, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Aquarius (the Waterman) in the world, the month Schwat in the year, and the esophagus of the human body, male and female.

SECTION 16.

THIRD DIVISION. He let the letter ק predominate in laughing, crowned it, combined one with the other, and formed by them: Pisces (the Fishes) in the world, the month Adar in the year, and the milt of the human body, male and female.

He made them as a conflict, drew them up like a wall; and set one against the other as in warfare.

# פרק ששי.

## משנה א.

אֵלּוּ הֵם שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ וְיָצְאוּ מֵהֶם שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת וְהֵם אֲוִיר וּמַיִם וְאֵשׁ וּמֵאָבוֹת תּוֹלְדוֹת שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת וְתוֹלְדוֹתֵיהֶם וְשִׁבְעָה כּוֹכָבִים וְצִבְאוֹתֵיהֶם וּשְׁנֵים עָשָׂר גְּבוּלֵי אֲלַכְסוֹן:

## משנה ב.

רְאָיָה לַדָּבָר עֵדִים נֶאֱמָנִים בָּעוֹלָם שָׁנָה נֶפֶשׁ וּשְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֹק וְשִׁבְעָה וּשְׁלֹשָׁה וּפְקָדָן כְּתָלִי וְגַלְגַּל וָלֵב:

## משנה ג.

שָׁלֹשׁ אִמּוֹת אֶ״מֶ״שׁ אֲוִיר אֵשׁ וּמַיִם אֵשׁ לְמַעְלָה וּמַיִם לְמַטָּה וַאֲוִיר רוּחַ חֹק מַכְרִיעַ בֵּנְתַיִם וְסִימָן לַדָּבָר הָאֵשׁ נוֹשֵׂא אֶת הַמַּיִם מ׳ דוֹמֶמֶת ש׳ שׁוֹרֶקֶת א׳ אֲוִיר רוּחַ חֹק מַכְרִיעַ בֵּנְתַיִם:

## משנה ד.

תָּלִי בְּעוֹלָם כְּמֶלֶךְ עַל כִּסְאוֹ גַּלְגַּל בְּשָׁנָה כְּמֶלֶךְ בִּמְדִינָה* לֵב בְּנֶפֶשׁ כְּמֶלֶךְ בְּמִלְחָמָה:

*) נ״א עַל חוֹמָה:

# CHAPTER VI.

## SECTION 1.

These are the three mothers or the first elements, אמ״ש from which emanated three progenitors; primitive air, water and fire, and from which emanated as their offspring, three progenitors and their offspring, namely: the seven planets and their hosts, and the twelve oblique points.

## SECTION 2.

To confirm this there are faithful witnesses; the world, year and man, the twelve, the Equipoise, the heptade, which God regulates like the Dragon,[40] (Tali) sphere and the heart.

## SECTION 3.

The first elements אמ״ש are air, water and fire; the fire is above, the water below, and a breath of air establishes the balance among them. For an illustration may serve, that the fire carries the water is the phonetic character of מ which is mute and ש is hissing like fire, there is א among them, a breath of air which places them in eqilibrium.[41]

## SECTION 4.

Dragon (Tali) is in the world like a king upon his throne, the sphere is in the year like a king in the empire, and the heart is in the human body like a king[42] in war.

## משנה ה.

גַּם אֶת זֶה לְעֻמַּת זֶה עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים טוֹב לְעֻמַּת רָע רָע לְעֻמַּת טוֹב טוֹב מִטּוֹב רָע מֵרָע הַטּוֹב מַבְחִין אֶת הָרַע וְהָרַע מַבְחִין אֶת הַטּוֹב טוֹבָה שְׁמוּרָה לַטּוֹבִים וְרָעָה שְׁמוּרָה לָרָעִים:

## משנה ו.

שְׁלֹשָׁה כָּל אֶחָד לְבַדּוֹ עוֹמֵד אֶחָד מְזַכֶּה וְאֶחָד מְחַיֵּיב וְאֶחָד מַכְרִיעַ בֵּנְתַיִם:

## משנה ז.

שִׁבְעָה שְׁלֹשָׁה מוּל שְׁלֹשָׁה וְאֶחָד מַכְרִיעַ בֵּנְתַיִם וּשְׁנֵים עָשָׂר עוֹמְדִין בַּמִּלְחָמָה: שְׁלֹשָׁה אוֹהֲבִים שְׁלֹשָׁה שׂוֹנְאִים שְׁלֹשָׁה מְחַיִּים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה מְמִיתִים:

## משנה ח.

שְׁלֹשָׁה אוֹהֲבִים הַלֵּב וְהָאָזְנַיִם שְׁלֹשָׁה שׂוֹנְאִים הַכָּבֵד הַמָּרָה וְהַלָּשׁוֹן שְׁלֹשָׁה מְחַיִּים שְׁנֵי נִקְבֵי הָאַף וְהַטְּחוֹל וּשְׁלֹשָׁה מְמִיתִים שְׁנֵי הַנְּקָבִים וְהַפֶּה וְאֵל מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָן מוֹשֵׁל בְּכֻלָּם מִמְּעוֹן קָדְשׁוֹ עַד עֲדֵי עַד אֶחָד עַל גַּבֵּי שְׁלֹשָׁה שְׁלֹשָׁה עַל גַּבֵּי שִׁבְעָה שִׁבְעָה עַל גַּבֵּי שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר וְכֻלָּם אֲדוּקִים זֶה בָזֶה:

### SECTION 5.

God has also set the one over against the other; the good against the evil, and the evil against the good; the good proceeds from the good, and the evil from the evil; the good purifies the bad, and the bad the good; the good is preserved for the good, and the evil for the bad ones.

### SECTION 6.

There are three of which every one of them stands by itself; one is in the affirmative, the other in the negative and one equalizes them.

### SECTION 7.

There are seven of which three are against three, and one places them in equilibrium. There are twelve which are all the time at war; three of them produce love, and three hatred, three are animators and three destroyers.

### SECTION 8.

The three that produce love are the heart and the ears; the three that produce hatred are the liver, the gall and the tongue; the three animators are the two nostrils and the milt; and the three destroyers are the mouth and the two openings of the body; and God, the faithful King, rules over all from His holy habitation to all eternity. He is one above three, three are above seven, seven above twelve, and all are linked together.

### משנה ט.

אֵלּוּ הֵם עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת שֶׁבָּהֶן חָקַק אֶהְיֶה יָהּ יְהוָֹה צְבָאוֹת אֵל שַׁדַּי יְהוָֹה אֱלֹהִים וְעָשָׂה מֵהֶם שְׁלֹשָׁה סְפָרִים וּבָרָא מֵהֶם אֶת כָּל עוֹלָמוֹ וְצָר בָּהֶם אֶת כָּל הַיְּצוּר וְאֶת כָּל הֶעָתִיד לָצוּר׃

### משנה י.

וּכְשֶׁהֵבִין אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ וְהִבִּיט וְרָאָה וְחָקַק וְחָצַב וְעָלְתָה בְּיָדוֹ נִגְלָה עָלָיו אֲדוֹן הַכֹּל וְקָרָאוֹ אוֹהֲבִי וְכָרַת לוֹ בְּרִית בֵּין עֶשֶׂר אֶצְבְּעוֹת יָדָיו וְהוּא בְּרִית הַלָּשׁוֹן וּבֵין עֶשֶׂר אֶצְבְּעוֹת רַגְלָיו וְהוּא בְּרִית הַמִּילָה וְקָרָא עָלָיו בְּטֶרֶם אֶצָּרְךָ בַבֶּטֶן יְדַעְתִּיךָ׃*

*) נ״א וְקָשַׁר עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁתַּיִם אוֹתִיּוֹת בִּלְשׁוֹנוֹ וְגִלָּה לוֹ אֶת יְסוֹדָן מְשָׁכָן בַּמַּיִם דְּלָקָן בָּאֵשׁ רְעָשָׁן בְּרוּחַ בְּעָרָן בְּשִׁבְעָה נְהָגָן בִּשְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה מַזָּלוֹת׃

סליק פרקא ו׳. וסליק ספר יצירה׃

## Section 9.

There[43] are twenty-two letters by which the I am, Yah, the Lord of hosts, Almighty and Eternal, designed, formed and created by three Sepharim, His whole world, and formed by them creatures and all those that will be formed in time to come.

## Section 10.

When[44] the patriarch Abraham comprehended the great truism, revolved it in his mind, conceived it perfectly, made careful investigations and profound inquiries, pondered upon it and succeeded in contemplations, the Lord of the Universe appeared to him, called him his friend, made with him a covenant between the ten fingers of his hands, which is the covenant of the tongue,[45] and the covenant between the ten toes of his feet, which is the covenant of circumcision, and said of him: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee." (Jer. I, 5.)

# NOTES.

1) Our author maintains that there is a first intelligent, self-existing, almighty, eternal ruling cause of all things, and that an everlasting entity produced nonentities by a progression of effects. The divine knowledge, he adds, differs from the human knowledge in such a degree, that it gives existence to all that is. חקק יה ה' צבאות is a talmudical expression. (See Treatise Bava Bathra p. 73.) It seems to me, that the author not only wanted to contradict Plato's assertion that the Supreme Being had need of a plan, like the human architect, to conduct the great design, when he made the fabric of the Universe, but also the common belief that God reasons and acts by ideas like a human being. As the prophet Isaiah exclaimed: "Behold! God has no ideas like you, and his ways of acting are not like yours." (Isaiah 55, 8—9.)

2) The number thirty-two is not only the fifth power of two, and the sum of ten units and twenty-two letters, but is also the sum of the first and last letter of the Hebrew Pentateuch, namely: ב 2 and ל 30, equal thirty-two. (See Kusari p. 343, translated into German by Dr. David Cassel.)

3) Paths denote powers, effects, kinds, forms, degrees or stages.

4) These Sepharim or three words of similar expression signify: first, number, calculation or idea; second, the word; third, the writing of the word. The idea, word and writing (of the word), are signs to man for a thing, and is not the thing itself, to the Creator, however, idea, word and writing (of the word) are the thing itself, or as some ancient Rabbis remarked: "מחשבה דבור ומעשה הכל הוא דבר אחד בהק"ב"ה, Idea, word and work are one and the same to God." There is an ideal world in the divine intellect, according to which this sensible world was made. The difference between the human and divine manner of thinking admits no comparison.

5) This means to say, that there has not been any matter or hyle existing from all eternity, containing different kinds of primitive atoms or molecules etc., as the Greek philosopher, Anaxagoras, taught, but that all things are the gradual emanations of one everlasting being. This idea is then symbolically explained in the next paragraph.

6) The design of the author is evidently to deduce the proof of the decade from the phenomena in the nature of man, who is generally considered the crown or the final cause of the terrestial creation, and upon whom God vouchsafed two most precious gifts, namely: the articulated word, and the

religious element (spiritual purity). This passage is explained by Isaac Satanow in his Hebrew Dictionary entitled Sephath Emeth, p. 44, b:
:הנה הלשון הוא עט סופר לתולדות השכלים ואבר המוליד
לתולדות החמריים וכל אחד הוא ברית עולם לקיים את האדם
לפליטה נצחית על שתי צלעותיו המרו וצורתו האי כדאיתיה
והאי כדאיתיה זה בחמרו וזה בצורתו. The tongue is, as it were, the descriptive pen of all the spiritual issues, and the genital parts are the originators of the corporeal substances. Every one of them is an eternal covenant in order to preserve the human race for ever, according to its twofold being: body and spirit. Each working after its own way, physically and spiritually.

7) Like Pythagoras, who taught that the digits inclusive number ten which are typified in Tetraktys, (*Τετρακτὺς*) namely: 1 plus 2 plus 3 plus 4 equal 10, and which comprise the whole arithmetical system of nature, etc. Our author endeavors to show the gradual emanation of all things from God, which were completely finished in ten spheres.

8) My Hebrew reading is :והושב יוצר על מכונו There are various readings; therefore Postellus rendered it: "restitue figmentum in locum suum;" Rittangel, "restitue formatorem in throno suo;" Pistorius, "fac sedere creatorem in throno suo." The author seems to ridicule here the Gnosticians who maintained that Demiurg was the creator of man and the sensual world.

9) In God is the beginning and he is the boundary of the Universe. Compare also the Talmud treatise Chagigah p. 12.

10) Here is contradicted the system of ditheism, consisting of an eternal God, the Author of all good and of "Hyle" or "Satan," the co-eternal and co-equal principle of evil, maintaining that an all-perfect God alone is the author of all good and evil, and has in his infinite wisdom so wonderfully contrived the nature of things, that physical and moral evil may produce good, and hence contribute to carry out the great design of the Supreme Being. Compare also Chap. 6 §5.

11) As the infinite series of numbers starts from one unit, so was the whole Universe formed a unity, that centres in the Godhead.

12) The meaning is, that as the living creatures which the prophet saw in his vision were stricken with such an awe, that they could not go any further to see the divine glory, and had to return, so is the decade an eternal secret to us and we are not permitted to understand it. We find this very idea in the Pythagorean system. The disciples of Pythagoras looked upon the decade as a holy number, and swore by it and by the Tetraktys which contain the number ten.

13) See above Note 1, God, idea and word are indivisible.

14) I adopted here the reading of Judah Halevi, namely: חקק וחצב בתך בהו רפש וטיט וגו׳ with the exception of the word תהו; because it is obvious from "Yezirah," Chap. II, that the author signifies by the word "Tohu," nothing, and not something, as Judah Halevi erroneously thought. Moses Butarel and others tell us that they had before them a correct copy of "Sepher Yezirah," where it reads: תהו זה קו ירוק וכו׳ בהו אלו אבנים מפולמות: The same passage is mentioned in the Talmud treatise Chagigah, p. 12, a, with the addition of המשוקעות בתהום שמהן יוצאין מים. The word המפולמות is translated by Rashi, *moist*. Some say it is a compound word of מפול מות; others of פלוני אלמוני, etc. But the word is not of Semitic origin; it is, according to my opinion, borrowed from the Greek as the word סרמן, etc., *Πλήμμη flood*. אבנים מפלמות flood-stones. The same word is used treatise Beza, p. 24, b, דגים המפולמין. fish that are caught from out of the flood.

15) According to the author, the space and six dimensions emanated from the ether.

16) Judah Halevi in his book entitled "Kusari," p. 356, illustrates it thus: The Creator is one, and the space has in the figurative expression six dimensions. The book "Yezirah," having ascribed to the Creator some names in the spiritual language, chooses now in the human language the finest sounds which are, as it were, the spirits of the other sounds, namely: "הוי" and says, that when the divine will was expressed by such a sublime name, it became that which the Exalted by praise wished to call forth according to the combination of "הוי." Hence it follows, that the material world was created in such a way and manner which corresponds with the material, namely, by the sublime spiritual name, which corresponds with the material name, יהו, יוה, הוי, היו, ויה, והי, and out of each of them became one dimension of the world, the sphere.

17) The author shows here by the symbol of a scale and the phonetic character of the fundamental letters א״מ״ש, that the opposite forces and the struggle which prevail in the smallest as well as in the largest circles of creation are appeased and calmed.

18) Meaning outlets, outgates of the creative power, formations.

19) The word ענג signifies joy, and when transposed, forming the word נגע it signifies just the contrary, trouble, plague. He means to say, that the letters of the words ענג and נגע are the same, but they signify nevertheless, opposite ideas on account of transposition. Just as the sphere remains the same during the rotation on its axis in its setting and in its rising; yet it appears to us as if it had undergone a great change on account of its different position.

20) My reading is צֵרְפָן שְׁקָלָן וְהֵמִירָן׃

21) The combination of the twenty-two letters without permutation is represented in the following table:

בא בג בד בה בו בז בח בט בי בכ בל במ בנ בס בע בפ בצ בק בר בש בת
גא גד גה גו גז גח גט גי גכ גל גמ גנ גס גע גפ גצ גק גר גש גת
דא דה דו דז דח דט די דכ דל דמ דנ דס דע דפ דצ דק דר דש דת
הא הו הז הח הט הי הכ הל המ הנ הס הע הפ הצ הק הר הש הת
וא וז וח וט וי וכ ול ומ ונ וס וע ופ וצ וק ור וש ות
זא זח זט זי זכ זל זמ זנ זס זע זפ זצ זק זר זש זת
חא חט חי חכ חל חמ חנ חס חע חפ חצ חק חר חש חת
טא טי טכ טל טמ טנ טס טע טפ טצ טק טר טש טת
יא יכ יל ימ ינ יס יע יפ יצ יק יר יש ית
כא כל כמ כנ כס כע כפ כצ כק כר כש כת
לא למ לנ לס לע לפ לצ לק לר לש לת
מא מנ מס מע מפ מצ מק מר מש מת
נא נס נע נפ נצ נק נר נש נת
סא סע ספ סצ סק סר סש סת
עא עפ עצ עק ער עש עת
פא פצ פק פר פש פת
צא צק צר צש צת
קא קר קש קת
רא רש רת
שא שת
תא

22) The number of combinations of twenty-two letters two and two without any permutation is according to the mathematical formula

$$n \cdot \frac{n-1}{2} = 22 - 1 \times \frac{22}{2} = 231.$$

23) The ancient philosophers maintained that if God is the first cause, and He is necessarily, He, the immediate effect of Him, as an absolute unity,

can only be again a unity. Hence from a being that is in every respect a unique being, there can only emanate one being; because would two essentially and truly different things issue conjointly from one being, they can only proceed from two different things of substance, that would consequently admit a division that is inconceivable. They then put the question, how came so many various beings into existence? Our author is therefore endeavoring to show that the whole universe emanated gradually from the spirit of the one living God.

24) The reading of Von Jo. Meyer and others is as follows: יצר מתוהו ממש ועשה אינו ישנו והצב עמודים גדולים מאויר שאינו נתפס וזה סימן צופה ומימר עושה כל היצור ואת כל הדברים בשם אחד וסימן לדבר עשרים ושתים מניינם וגוף אחד: My reading according to a manuscript of Rabbi Isaac Luria, which I have preferred to all others, is thus: יצר ממש מתוהו ועשה את אינו ישנו וחצב עמודים גדולים מאויר שאינו נתפס וזה סימן אות א עם כולן וכולן עם א צופה ומימר ועשה את כל היצור ואת כל הדבור שם אחד וסימן לדבר עשרים ושתים חפצים בגוף א:

25) It has been already mentioned above Chap. i, §1, that God, his idea and his word are a unity; hence the author signifies by the letter Aleph the air from which emanated the creative speech, etc.

26) Here is meant: ethereal air, ethereal water, ethereal fire, the macrocosm, the courses of time and microcosm. Many offspring or derivations came from the latter three, as their progenitors, as it is explained afterwards in the chapter.

27) The author endeavors to show how the creative divine word became more condensed and how a new series of productions came out of three elements.

28) In ancient times coldness was considered to be a substance. [See Psalm 147, 17.]

29) Id est, made it the reigning power.

30) Namely, with the two other elements.

31) That is to say a different combination of the elements.

32) According to the opinion of the author, it may be arranged as follows:

| | Aleph. | Mem. | Sheen. |
|---|---|---|---|
| World: | Air, | Earth, (Inclusive of Land and Sea.) | Heaven or Atmosphere. |
| Man: | Breast, | Belly, | Head. |
| Year: | Moistness, | Coldness, | Heat. |

33) The aspirating pronunciation of ρ in the Greek, was adopted by the ancient Jews in Palestine for the Hebrew letter ר. They pronounced it partly aspirated and partly unaspirated. [See Dr. Geiger's Lehr-und Lesebuch der Mischnah, p. 22, and Dr. Graetz's Gnosticismus, p. 117.]

34) According to the idea of our author, there emanated from the unity of God three ethereal elements: primitive air from the spirit, from the air, primitive water, and from the water, primitive fire or ether, out of which came other spheres of existence in the significant and highly important number, seven, from which descended smaller spheres and which produced again others. He endeavors to show how the ideal became, after numerous emanations, more condensed, palpable and concrete. The whole creation is thus contemplated as a pyramid, terminating in a point at the top with a broad basis. [See Dr. Graetz's Gnosticismus, p. 224.]

35) Compare Chapter I, Section 3, Note, 8.

36) The order of the planets (including the Sun) is stated here according to the Ptolemaic system which was in vogue even among the learned men till the middle of the fifteenth century, namely: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. But this arrangement is undoubtedly an interpolation of a later time, as the author of the book "Yezirah" lived many years before Ptolemy. And indeed Prof. Jo. Friedrich Von Meyer and others of reliable authority had in their copies of "Yezirah" the following order: חמה נוגה כוכב לבנה שבתי צדק מאדים. Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun.

37) Philo (Allegor 1, 42,) after having called attention to the fact that the heptade is to be found in many biblical laws, in the vowels of the Greek language, in the gamut and in the organs of the human body, exclaims, similar to our author: "The whole nature exults in the heptade!"

38) The rule for permutation is as follows: $(n-1).n.1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 5 \times 6 \times 7 = 5040$. In our edition it reads: חמשת אלפים וארבע בתים. Five thousand and four houses, which is obviously a mistake, it should read: 5040 houses. חמשת אלפים וארבעים בתים.

39) I read גרגרת instead of קורקבן for two reasons. In the first place, the same thing is mentioned afterwards, and in the second place, it is proved by the expression לעיסה that the author meant גרגרת and not קורקבן.

40) Some maintain that by the expression Tali is understood the constellation Draco or Dragon, which is a very large constellation extending for a great length from East to West; beginning at the tail which lies half way between the Pointers and the Pole Star, and winding round between the Great and Little Bear by a continued succession of bright stars from 5 to 10 degrees asunder, it coils round under the feet of the Little Bear, sweeps round the pole of the ecliptic, and terminates in a trapezium formed by four conspicuous stars from 30 to 35 degrees from North Pole. Dr. Steinshneider (see Magazin fuer Literatur des Auslandes, 1845) and Dr. Cassel (in his commentary to the book entitled Kusari,) maintain that the ancient Jewish

astronomers signified by the word Tali, not the constellation Draco, but the line which joins together the two points in which the orbit of the moon intercepts the ecliptic (Dragon's head and tail). Dr. Cassel is of the opinion that our author meant here, probably the invisible, celestial or universal axis that carries the whole Universe.

41) Our author means to say that the water has a great disposition to unite itself with the caloric, thus for instance is the fire latent in steam, but the air equipoises them.

42) The meaning is, as God is the centre of the Universe, so have the macrocosm, the seasons and temperature and the microcosm, their centres receiving power from the principal centre to regulate and rule.

43) The substance of this Mishnah is mentioned in the Talmud treatise Berachoth, p. 55, a. It reads there: אמר רב יהודה אמר רב יודע היה בצלאל לצרף אותיות שנבראו בהן שמים וארץ: "Rab Jehudah stated in the name of Rab, that Bezalel understood to combine letters by which heaven and earth were created." To this the commentator Rashi adds: "as it is taught in the book Yezirah." It is undoubtedly certain that the book Yezirah, or a cosmogony as it is represented there, was known to Rab, who was a disciple of Jehudah Hanasi, during the second part of the second century. (C. E.) See treatise Berachoth, p. 55 a, where the commentator Rashi referred to the book Yezirah.

44) This whole paragraph is an interpolation of an unknown hand, as it can be easily proved.

45) I have translated according to the reading of Rabbi Judah Halevi. The reading of Rabbi Luria is as follows: וקשר עשרים ושתים אותיות בלשונו וגילה לו את סודו משכן במים דלקן באש רעשן ברוח בערן בשבעה נהגין בשנים עשר מזלות׳ "He fastened twenty-two letters on his tongue and revealed to him. His mystery, He drew them by water, kindled them by fire and thundered them by the wind, He lighted them by seven, and rules them by twelve constellations." Pistor. renders it: "Tranat per aquam, accendit in igne grandine signavit in äere. Disposuit cum septem et gubernavit cum duodecim." Postellus' version is: "Attraxit eum in aqua, accendit in spiritu, inflammavit in septem aptatum cum duodecim signis." Meyer translates it: "Er zog sie mit Wasser, zündet sie an mit Feuer, erregte sie mit Geist, vebrannte sie mit sieben, goss sie aus mit den zwoelf Gestirnen."

# GLOSSARY

OF

# RABBINICAL WORDS.

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## א

אָדַק *v.* To adhere, cohere. VI, 8.

אֲוִיר *n.* [Syriac ,אאר Greek ἀήρ] Air. II, ..

אוֹת *n.* Sign, letter; אוֹתִיּוֹת יְסוֹד fundamental letters. I, 1.

אֵילָךְ *adv.* מִכָּאן וְאֵילָךְ hinc et ulterius; from now further. IV 16

אֵלּוּ *adj.* These. Equals the biblical .אֵלֶּה VI, 1.

אֲלַכְסוֹן *adj.* [Greek λόξον] Oblique, diagonal direction. V, 2.

אֶמְצַע *n.* Middle. centre. I, 2.

## ב

בּוּרִי *n.* Clearness, perspicuity. I, 3. וְהַעֲמֵד דָּבָר עַל בּוּרְיוֹ and put the subject in a clear point of view.

בָּבָא *n.* Division. V, 5.

בֵּינוֹתַיִם *or* בֵּנְתַיִם Composed of ,בֵּין שְׁתַּיִם omitting שׁ between them. I, 1. [See Duke's Sprache der Mischnah, p. 68.]

## ג

גַּב *n.* Back. עַל גַּבֵּי upon the back id est, upon or above. VI, 8.

גּוּף *n.* Body, substance II, 5.

גַּלְגַּל *n.* Circle, celestial orb, or sphere. II, 4.

## ד

דִּבּוּר *n.* Word. I, 8.

## ה

הִרְהֵר *v.* Think, muse, meditato, reflect. I, 7.

הִרְהוּר *n.* Reflection, meditotion. V, 1.

## ז

זְכוּת *n.* Innocence, purity, godliness, merit. II, 1.

## ח

חוֹבָה *n.* Misdeed, trespass. II, 1.

חָזַר *v.* To return, to turn one's self round. II, 5.

חֲלִילָה *n.* Rotation; from חָלַל to dance round. II, 5.

## ט

טְחוֹל *n.* Milt, spleen. V, 4.

## כ

כָּאן *or* כַּאן *adv.* Here, there; מִכַּאן thence, from thence. IV, 16.

כּוֹכָב *n.* Star; especially the planet Mercury. IV, 7.

כּוּן *piel* כִּוֵּן *v.* Direct; מְכֻוָּן directed, situated. I, 2.

כִּיעוּר *n.* Ugliness. IV, 3.

כָּךְ *or* לְכָךְ *adv.* So, thus. I, 7.

כָּרַע *Hiph.* הִכְרִיעַ *v.* To intervene in any thing, to mediate the peace, accomodate a quarrel. II, 1.

## ל

לְעִיטָה *n.* Eating, swallowing. V, 1.

לְפִיכָךְ *adv.* Composed of the words לְפִי and כָּךְ. According to that, therefore. IV, 15.

## מ

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| מַאְדִים | *n.* | The planet Mars. IV, 7. |
| מִדָּה | *n.* | Measure, quality, divine attribute. I, 4. |
| מִשְׁנָה | *n.* | Doctrine, lesson, paragraph. |
| מַזָּלוֹת | *n.* | Constellations; especially the twelve signs of the Zodiac. V, 3. מַזָּל טוֹב a happy constellation. |
| כְּמִין | *adv.* | It is a particle like כְּ, as; it is added the word מִין kind, denoting: as a kind of, like, as. II, 4. |
| מֵימַר | *v.* | Chald. inf. מֵאמַר or מֵמַר. To speak, command. II, 5. |
| מַמָּשׁ | *n.* | Substance, reality. II, 5. |
| מַעֲזִיבָה | *n.* | Rampart, a floor, pavement. I, 8. |
| מָרָה | *n.* | Gall. V, 4 |
| מִתְנַהֵג | | See נָהַג. IV, 1. |

## נ

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| נָהַג | *v.* | With a בְּ following after it, signifies: to make use of any thing. IV, 1. |
| נוֹגַהּ | *n.* | The planet Venus. IV, 7. |
| נָעַץ | *v.* | Chald. Stick in, fasten, conjoin, connect. I, 6. |
| נֶקֶב | *n.* | Opening. IV, 8. |

## ס

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| סָדַר | *v.* | Arrange. V, 16. |
| סִימָן | *n.* | σημεῖον Sign, illustration. II, 4. [See Geiger's Lesestücke der Mishnah, p. 121.] |
| סְלִיק | *n.* | Finished; the end (of a book or chapter.) |

## ע

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| עֲרִיבָה | *n.* | Contention, rivalry. V, 5. |
| עָתִיד | *n.* | Future. II, 2. |

## פ

פֶּרֶק *n.* Chapter, section.

פָּשׁוּט *adj.* Divested of clothes, undressed, simple. I, 8.

## צ

צֶדֶק *n.* The planet Jupiter. IV, 7.

צְפִיָּיה *n.* Appearance. I, 5.

צָרַף *v.* Refine, melt together, connect, combine. II, 2.

## ק

קָבַע *v.* To fix, to fasten. I, 8. II, 3.

קֵיבָה *or* קֵבָה *n.* Stomach. V, 4.

קֻרְקְבָן *or* קוּרְקְבָן *n.* Stomach. V, 4.

## ר

רְאָיָה *n.* Argument, evidence. VI, 2.

רְאִיָּה *n.* Sight. V, 1.

רְוִיָּה *n.* Redundancy of water, moistness. III. 4.

רֵיחַ *v.* Smell. V, 1.

## ש

שַׁבְּתַאי *n.* The planet Saturn. IV, 7.

שִׂיחָה *n.* Speaking. V. 1.

שְׁמִיעָה *n.* Hearing. V, 1.

שֵׁרֵת *v.* To serve. I, 8.

## ת

תְּלִי *n.* The constellation Draco or Dragon. VI, 2.

תַּשְׁמִישׁ *n.* Coition. V, 1.

תָּפַס *or* תָּפַשׂ *v.* To seize, to take hold of.

# A SKETCH

OF THE

# TALMUD,

THE

## WORLD RENOWNED COLLECTION

OF

## JEWISH TRADITIONS,

BY


REV. DR. ISIDOR KALISCH.



NEW YORK:

L. H. FRANK & CO., PUBLISHERS AND PRINTERS,

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"It is the essence of the Talmud which is ridiculed by those who understand it the least, and which is terribly abused in our own midst by those who hold themselves out as its sincere devotees." (Dr. Ad. Jellinek's Sermons, Vol. II, p. 290.)

# PREFACE.

It is my design in publishing a "Sketch of the Talmud," to recall men from prepossessed partial views, to truth.

The fate and history of the literary productions of the Jewish people in the different countries all over the habitable globe, found everywhere interpreters and expounders.

But the Talmud, which is the principal source of Judaism and is an important historical document of a period of seven hundred years, showing and explaining clearly the development and retardation of Judaism, and containing much which is of great importance to the knowledge and history of the Bible, although it still requires that the torch of criticism should throw light upon it, is very seldom used properly, or is ignored altogether. (See Dr. A. Geiger's posthumous works, Vol. II, p. 127.)

Yes, it was and is often subject to the worst abuse.*

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* The governments of Italy, France, etc., influenced by priestly fanaticism, condemned the Talmud as heretical and consequently it suffered several times the martyrdom of heresy.

It requires no prophet to see that gross ignorance and misrepresentation are the real causes of it. For among millions of Jews and Christians, there are only very few who read and studied the Talmud all through, as it takes a whole life-time merely to read all the books bearing that name, and what makes it most difficult is, that although one part of it, namely, the Mishnah, is written in the Hebrew language, the second part, however, called Gemara, is composed in a style where frequently are used Chaldaic, Persian, Syric, Greek and Latin idioms, which are written with Hebrew characters without vowels.

It is therefore no wonder that it cannot be studied by many, and some know only that which they have read somewhere, quoted from another secondary source.

Having for nearly half a century devoted my time and energy to the study of the talmudical literature, I hope that I am fully prepared to give to the kind reader a true, clear and succinct "Sketch of the Talmud."

May it be as favorably received by every friend of literature and enlightenment, as many portions of it have been, when I published them some years ago in a popular Christian paper, read by tens of thousands.

ISIDOR KALISCH.

*Newark, August*, 1877.

# SKETCH OF THE TALMUD.

The word Talmud is derived from the Hebrew verb לָמֹד (*lamod*) to learn, to teach; signifying, oral instruction, or traditional teaching, and is the title of a collection of Jewish traditions and laws.

It is called *Talmud* emphatically, as the Law of Moses is called with emphasis "תּוֹרָה" "ὁ νομος" "the Law," instead of תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה the Law of Moses.

It contains, as Buxtorf filius in dedic. ad Lex. Talm. correctly remarked, sound theological doctrines, although, as Maimonides somewhere says, they are occasionally concealed in useless shells.

It contains, as it were, a collection of a great many small coins, and of faithful and very useful vestiges which have escaped the destruction of Jewish antiquity *to the shame of the perfidy of some modern Jews*, to the enlightening of the history *of both Testaments*, and to a right explanation of ceremonies, precepts and customs of the former Jewish nation. We find therein the noblest proverbs of antiquity, beautiful sentiments, acute, tasteful and deep thoughts, and innumerable allusions which will make the reader not only better, but also wiser and more learned, and

which, like brilliant jewels, do not grace the Hebrew language in a less degree than the elegant phrases which the classics, the languages of Greece and Rome contain.

The Talmud consists of two parts: first, מִשְׁנָה Mishnah, (from the Hebrew verb שָׁנֹה *shanoh*, to teach), traditional precept; second, גְּמָרָה Gemarah, (from the Hebrew verb גָּמֹר *gamor*, to finish, to conclude), because therein was rendered the final judgment or decree, after a thorough discussion of the matter.

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## THE FIRST EDITOR OF THE MISHNAH.

The first collection of the Mishnah was made by Hillel Hanasi, (the prince) a contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, who acknowledged the authority of his learned countryman, as appears from Matt. xxiii, 3: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' chair, therefore observe and do whatever they enjoin upon you." It is said (treatise Chagigah, p. 14 et seq.) that the traditions were so many that they could fill up six or seven hundred books, but Hillel rejected a great many and reduced them to six books.

Hillel was a native of Babylon and settled in Jerusalem, when forty years of age. Having no profession whatever, and being destitute of all other means of obtaining a livelihood, he obtained his daily bread by cutting and splitting wood. Impelled, however, by an unquenchable thirst for truth and knowledge, he even offered his services as wood-cutter

gratuitously to poor Rabbis, so that they might allow him to listen to their lectures. Having acquired some knowledge, he desired then to attend a regular course of studies at the most celebrated academy of that time, where the two ingenious and renowned teachers, the proselytes Shemajah and Abtalion, presided.

The poor wood-cutter tried all that lay in his power to earn enough to pay the admission fee to the door-keeper. One day in winter he worked very hard, but in spite of his steady and heavy labor, he could not gain the usual amount he needed, on account of the shortness of the day. He could, consequently, neither buy for himself the necessary meals, nor, much less, could he pay the door-keeper's fee at the college. Hillel then—like a thief in the night—climbed to the roof, and regardless of cold and danger, listened with close attention to the word of God and the explanations of the sages. The heaven was overcast with clouds, the storm raged fearfully and the snowflakes fell thick and fast upon him; but still poor Hillel listened on. His limbs began to stiffen, he became benumbed and all sense of feeling at last was lost. He was found in the morning apparently dead; but after applying many restoratives he was brought to consciousness again.

When the Scribes or Sophrim were informed of his intense longing for truth, they granted him free admission to their lectures. Hillel made great proficiency in all his studies, and soon the title of Nasi, prince, was conferred on him. He performed his

official duties during the term of forty years with great distinction, so that it was said of him that he was worthy to be in the rank of the prophets. His great erudition and sound principles, as well as his excellent character, entitle him to be always remembered among the brightest examples of human intellect and nobility of heart.

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## NOBLE TRAITS OF HILLEL, THE FIRST EDITOR OF THE MISHNAH.

Experience teaches us, that patience and sweetness of disposition conquer always the hearts of men. These traits subdue the passionate, disarm the irascible and draw forth love and admiration. Hillel posessed these virtues in the highest degree. Therefore he was appointed Nasi, prince, by King Herod, which office he held with the greatest dignity until his eightieth year. This honorable position was retained by his descendants for ten generations.

It is related (treatise Sabbath, p. 31) that two men were once wagering four hundred dinars whether Hillel could be provoked to anger or not. He who thought that he could make Hillel angry, entered his residence on a Friday afternoon and unceremoniously rushed towards the door of the bath-room where he was just taking a bath, shouting in a gruff voice: "Is Hillel here? Where is Hillel?" without adding the title of Nasi. Hillel dressed himself hastily, and

replied: "What do you wish my son?" "I want to ask you a question." "What is it, my son?"

"I would like to know," said the man, "why do the Babylonians have pointed heads?" Hillel replied, "It seems to me that the midwives are to blame for it." The man went away, but soon returned, crying out: "Hillel! Hillel! where is Hillel?" Hillel, who had returned from his bath, speedily put on his cloak and asked: "What do you wish, my son?"

"I want to be informed why the Thermodeens have weak eyes?" "That is a very important question, my son. I suppose they are subjected to dullness of sight because they live in a sandy country, and the wind drives the sand into their eyes." The man left, but soon returned in the same impudent manner. Hillel asked again with a pleasing countenance: "What do you wish, my son?"

"Tell me," said the stranger, "why the Africans have such broad feet?" "Indeed! that is a question of great moment, my son!" answered Hillel, "but I think the reason of it is, because they are obliged to walk mostly barefooted, on account of their living in marshy countries."

"I would ask you," continued the stranger, "many more queries, but I fear you will be angry with me." Hillel seated himself and said: "Let me hear all your questions and I will try to answer them." "Are you," rejoined the stranger, "he whom the people call the Prince of Israel?" "Yes," said Hillel. "Well," continued the stranger, "I wish that there

be no more such men as you in Israel." "Why, my son?" interrogated Hillel. "Because I have lost on account of you a wager of four hundred dinars," said the stranger, and related to him the whole story. Hillel kindly reprimanded him, and advised him to be more prudent, and the pecuniary loss he had met with would serve him as a lesson in the future.

Three heathens being desirous to embrace Judaism made their applications personally for this purpose to Shamai, a colleague of Hillel; but, notwithstanding he was a disciple of the latter, he adopted the great virtue which distinguished his master and friend merely theoretically, and not practically. Shamai taught: (see Proverbs of the Fathers, Chap. I, § 15) "Let it be thy business to study the law; say little and do much, and receive all men with affability." In spite of this wise teaching, however, he did not control his propensity to anger, and when the above mentioned three strangers had an interview with him concerning their conversion to Judaism, he became so irritated at them on acccount of the peculiar conditions they suggested, that he launched into invectives against them and sent them away.

They then went to Hillel, who received them kindly and endeavored to gain their hearts by his usual mildness. One said, "I wish to become a Jew, provided I can be elected to the office of a high priest." Hillel replied, "My son, whoever desires to hold an office should know all the duties connected with it, in order to discharge them faithfully. Let us, there-

fore, make ourselves familiar with all the laws and privileges concerning the priesthood." He read with the heathen the third and fourth books of Moses, and when they came to the tenth verse of the third chapter in Numbers, where it reads: "And the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death," Hillel remarked, that even King David, not being a descendant of Aaron, would have suffered the same punishment, if he had attempted to usurp the priestly dignity. The heathen, satisfied with this explanation, embraced Judaism unconditionally.

The second said, "I am desirous to become a Jew, provided that I may keep the written, but not the oral law." Hillel then taught him the letters of the alphabet in their usual order, and afterwards reversed them. "Why is that?" asked the heathen. "Well!" answered Hillel, "why do you reject the statement that one teacher handed down to another the correct statement of the law?" Prompted by this pertinent observation, the stranger also embraced Judaism unconditionally.

The third said, "I wish to become a proselyte, provided the Jewish religion can be taught to me in so short a time as I can stand on one foot." "Whatever is not pleasant unto thee, do not unto thy fellowman. This is the substance of the law and the prophets; all the rest is but the commentary thereon. Go and reflect on it," replied Hillel, and thereby won over the third by his kindness and skill.

The above principle is also quoted, Tobit iv, 15:

"Do that to no man which thou hatest." Compare also Matt. vii, 12: "Therefore all things whatever ye would" etc.

It would not be out of place to make the reader acquainted with many more maxims of Hillel.

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## HILLEL'S PROVERBS.

Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving and pursuing peace; loving mankind and bringing them to the study of the law. Proverbs of the Fathers, Chap. i, Sec. 12.

He who is ambitious of magnifying his name, destroyeth his name; and he who doth not increase his knowledge, diminisheth it; and he who doth not study the law deserves death; and whosoever useth for himself the crown of the law will perish. Ibid 13.

If I do not act for myself who can do it for me? When I am alone by myself, what am I? If I act not now, when shall I? Ibid 14.

Hillel once saw a skull floating on the surface of the water, and he said to it: "Because thou didst drown others, thou wast drowned, and at the end will those who drowned thee also be drowned."

Ibid Chap. ii, Sec. 7.

If the great I AM is here, all is here, and if the I AM is not here, who is here? Therefore reflect thereon continually, for all is in Him, and according

to the labor which thou wilt undergo, so shall be thy recompense.* Aboth derabbi Nathan, Chap. xii.

Separate not thyself from the congregation; nor have confidence in thyself until the day of thy death. Judge not thy neighbor until thou art placed in the same circumstances; neither utter anything which is incomprehensible, in the hope that it afterwards may be comprehended; nor say, When I shall have leisure I will study; for perhaps thou mayest never have the leisure. Proverbs of the Fathers, Chap. ii, Sec. 5.

The rude man feareth not sin; the ignorant cannot be pious; the bashful cannot become learned, nor the passionate be a teacher; nor will he who is mostly engaged in commerce become wise.

In a place where there are no eminent men endeavor thou to become eminent. Ibid Sec. 6.

He who increaseth his flesh multiplieth food for worms; he who multiplieth riches increaseth care; he who increaseth female servants increaseth lewdness; he who multiplieth man servants increaseth robbery; but he who increaseth his knowledge of the law increaseth life.

He who attends much at school increaseth wisdom; he who increaseth in reflection increaseth in prudence; he who exerciseth much charity multiplieth peace.

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*אם אני כאן הכל כאן אם אני לית כאן מאן כאן היפכה
והופך בה דכולא בה ולכולהון לפום צערא אגרא.

If one has acquired a good name, he has acquired it for himself; if one has acquired a knowledge of the law, he has obtained immortal life.

Ibid Sec. 8.

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Hillel was the first Jewish scholar who made many critical, exegetical and paleographical remarks on the Bible, when he lectured thereon in Jerusalem. These were partly written on the margin of the book and partly handed down orally from age to age until they were finally collected as *Masora*, (מסורה) tradition, which was finished in the eleventh century.

"Progress and developement" was Hillel's motto. He did not endeavor to maintain everything in the Jewish religion in statu quo, but he tried earnestly and zealously to evoke an unceasing activity in the field of religion. His intention was not to make the law more onerous and to interpret it at pleasure; but he always strove earnestly to harmonize it with the circumstances of time and place.

That he did this, however, without any religious scruple, arose from the fact that this had already been done in many instances by the prophets. In this manner it was that the ceremony of circumcision was dispensed with under Moses, while the Israelites were sojourning in the wilderness, and the Day of Atonement under Solomon. The prophet Elijah, who was not a descendant of Aaron, sacrificed at an unholy place. Furthermore, Ezra altered a biblical law in order to punish the Levites, because they did

not accompany him when he went up with the exiles from Babylon to settle Jerusalem. He ordered the first tithes to be given to the priests, and not to the Levites, as the Bible commands. (Treatise Jebamoth, p. 86, b.)

Hillel suspended an express biblical law when he was convinced that it had become impracticable and might prove detrimental to the general welfare. We find accordingly the following departure in treatise Shebiith, Chap. xii, 3–4: "When one has filed a declaration in court that he will not consider his debtor released at the release year, then does the seventh year not extinguish debt." He termed such documents פְּרוֹזבּוּל πρός βουλή *prosbole*, which is a Greek expression meaning "before the court." He made this institution, as it is explicitly stated in treatise Gittin, Chap. iv, 3, in order to preserve the well-being of the Jewish state; as the rich had refused to lend to the poor, notwithstanding the law makes benevolence obligatory, in view of the debt at the advent of the release year.

Since Hillel considered all the religious laws as instrumental to the advancement of the temporal and spiritual welfare of man, he handed down seven hermeneutic exegetical rules, (Aboth derabbi Nathan Chap. xxxvii, and Siphra, at the beginning), by which the oral and written law should be interpreted, according to the wants of the time.

He stated, "An inference may be made: first, from minor to major and from major to minor; sec-

ond, from a similarity of phrases used in different passages; third, from the principal idea contained in one verse; fourth, from the principal idea contained in two verses; fifth, from comparing a general view of a subject with its descriptive details; sixth, from a particular expression followed then by a general one; seventh, from whatever may be learned from the connection." *

The noble and praiseworthy intention of Hillel was, however, not quite understood by his own disciples, nor by those of his hasty-tempered antagonist Shamai.

About one hundred years later Rabbi Ishmael taught that there are thirteen hermeneutic exegetical rules. (See Thorath Kohanim, in the beginning.) Some time still later Rabbi Elieser, the son of Jose, the Galilean, added again nineteen hermeneutic exegetical rules. These thirty-two rules were then generally adopted to expound the biblical scriptures, and laws were thus accumulated upon laws, so that every breath of a Jewish life was besieged by rabbinical requirements, and the small sacred volume was drowned in the ocean of Mishnahs.

Besides this, the discord which took place between the school of Hillel and the school of Shamai added

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*שבעה מדות דרש הלל הזקן לפני בני בתירה אלו הן: ק"ו וגזירה שוה, ובנין אב מכתוב אחד, ובנין אב משני כתובים, ומכלל ופרט ומפרט וכלל, וכיוצא בו במקום אחר, ודבר הלמד מענינו (אבות דרבי נתן פרק ל"ז):

a great deal to the accumulation of new laws and regulations; because the disciples of Shamai mostly forbade that which those of Hillel allowed. (Idioth, Chap. iii–iv.) It went so far that the Mosaic law appeared to be like two different codes, and on account of the contradictory regulations of the teachers, (*Thanaim*, תַנאִים), who acted as they thought proper. the religious people of one place were considered irreligious at another.

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## THE SECOND EDITOR OF THE MISHNAH.

To remedy this evil, Rabbi Jehudah Hanasi, the son of Rabbi Simeon, the son of Gamliel, or as they used to call him, Rabenu Hakadosh, "our holy teacher," or simply "Rabbi," as Aristotle was emphatically called in the Middle Ages, "the philosopher,"—collected all traditions as well as the discussions on the particulars of all ceremonies, rearranged and revised all the rabbinical laws and explanations given in the various academies during the former centuries. He arranged them also like the first edition, in six principal parts, (*Sedarim*) each of these again into single books or treatises, (*Masechtoth*) which were sub-divided into chapters, (*Perakim*) and these again into paragraphs, which are strictly called *Mishnahs.* He finished this work one hundred and twenty years after the destruction of the second temple at Jerusalem.

Rabbi Jehudah was the first teacher who ventured to reduce all traditions and rabbinical laws to

writing; because in former times only the prophets, heads of congregations and colleges were allowed to have copies of the traditional laws, which they called "*Megilloth Setarim*," "Secret Scrolls." They had to study them secretly in order to commit them to memory, that they might then be able to teach them in public orally. But when the Israelites continued to emigrate into distant countries, and were thus prevented from attending the Jewish academies, Rabbi Jehudah considered it much better to break a time-honored custom and reduce the oral law to writing, so that it might be in every man's hand, and be thus accessible to all, than to expose the whole tradition to the risk of being misunderstood or forgotten.

Although many short-sighted zealots and fanatics decried this innovation as a heresy, Rabbi Jehudah did, nevertheless, carry out his view, and justified it by referring to the words of the Psalmist, cxix, 126: "It is time for the Lord to work, for they have made void thy law." This verse he interpreted thus: It is time to act in behalf of the Lord, means, that single biblical laws may be violated in order to preserve the fundamental principles of the whole law. (Treatise Berachoth, p. 54, a, etc.)

He was a contemporary of the Roman Emperor Antonine the Pious, who was his intimate friend. Having been appointed Nasi by the Emperor, he used his influence on his imperial friend to the best advantage of his co-religionists. Therefore it is said

of him, that since Moses he was the first who combined in a high degree erudition with worldly power.

He commanded thus the respect of all, and his collection of the Mishnah was acknowledged and adopted by all Jewish congregations as a religious text book. But after the publication of the Mishnah by Rabbi Jehudah Hanasi, his disciples busied themselves in making collections of the expositions of the various opinions to be met with therein, respecting the same subject, and to complete them. Thus originated the work called תוספתא (*Thosephta*) a "Supplement," or "Addition." That of Rabbi Chija and Rabbi Oshaja was preferred on account of its accuracy. The same composed also a book, ברייתא (*Baraitha*), which contains the excluded portion of the Mishnah code by Rabbi Jehudah.

There were other collections made, called *Mechiltha*, of Rabbi Ishmael; *Sifra* or *Thorath Kohanim*, *Siphrai of Rav*, *Pesicta d'rab Kahana*, etc., etc.

Here I must remark, that all the Rabbis from the days of Simon the Just until the time of Rabbi Jehudah Hanasi had the title of *Thanaim*, teachers, or סופרים Scribes. The Rabbis and chiefs of academies who afterwards presided were called אמורים (*Amoraim*), preachers, expounders.

As there were accumulated many commentaries on the Mishnah, it became then necessary to compile a new text book. This was entitled גמרא (*Gamara*), the final judgment or decree.

There are two collections; first, the Hierosolmitic or Tiberianic; second, the Babylonian, both called Talmud. First, תלמוד ירושלמי (*Talmud Jerushalmi*); second, תלמוד בבלי (*Talmud Bavly*). The first was edited by Rabbi Jochanan, in Palestine, about three hundred years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the latter by Rabbi Ashe, president of the Babylonian academy of Sura,—from 365 to 425—and by his pupil and friend Abina.

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## THE SYSTEM OF THE PHARISEES.

The men educated in the rabbinical colleges at Jerusalem before the destruction of the second temple were generally called פְּרוּשִׁים *Pharisees*,* expounders. The word פָּרוּשׁ is derived from the verb פָּרַשׁ *Parosh*, to explain, to interpret.

I will now endeavor to sketch with an unbiassed mind the system of these Pharisees, as it is to be found in the vast rabbinical literature.

It seems to me that, led by the principle of enjoying the substance and casting away the shell, the Pharisees made an eclectic use of the Grecian philosophy, assigning as they did, high authority to the Socratic, Platonic and Aristotelian schools. (See my "Guide for Rational Inquiries into the Biblical Writings," p. 63—71.)

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* Philo calls them ὅσιοι, the pious, the religious. He took the word פרוש *Parush* in the Aramaic sense, meaning: one who secludes himself from worldly passions and devotes himself to the duties of piety.

They were votaries of supernaturalism and entertained the following opinions: God is an infinite, (Midrash Rabba Genes. Chap. 68,) unique, spiritual, (treatise Chagigah, fol. 15,) eternal, necessary, providential being (Midrash Rabba Exod. Chap. 3, and treatise Berachoth, fol. 9,) who cannot be conceived by human understanding, (treatise Berachoth, fol. 31). He does not exist in the world, but the whole universe exists in him, (Midrash Rabba, Chap. 68;) wherefore God is also called the infinite space, *Makom.* He can be perceived only through His works. (Ibid, Chap. 1.)

As regards the creation, they taught that out of the many systems of worlds which were present to His wisdom, he created the best possible one, and instituted the best order, Optimism. (Ibid Genes. Chap. 3.) Hence the principle laid down by Rabbi Akiba: "Whatever God does is well done." (Ibid Genes. Chap. 3, and treatise Berachoth, p. 60.)

This is illustrated by the following story. It is related, (treatise Berachoth, p. 60, b,): Rabbi Akiba was once on a journey, and when reaching the last inhabited place bordering on an extensive forest, he wanted to stop there over night. But as he had applied everywhere in vain for lodging, he said to them: "Whatever God does is well done." He continued his way and resolved to stay all night in the forest.

He tied his jaded mule to a tree, lighted a torch and fastened it on a dry stump, because the night

was very dark. He let the rooster, (the alarm clock in the night of past ages,) which he carried with him to tell him the time, perch. He had hardly climbed up a high tree in order to spend the night in safety, when a lion came and tore his mule to pieces, a wild cat devoured his rooster and the wind blew out his torch. After observing all that had happened, he said to himself, "Whatever God does is well done."

During the same night, the enemy, who were encamped in that vicinity, took that very place by surprise where he had wanted to stay all night, laid it low, and made nearly all its inhabitants prisoners. He then addressed all the fugitives who took to the woods for a refuge: "Was I not right in maintaining that whatever God does is well done? If I had remained in the city, or my torch continued to burn, or had my mule neighed, or the rooster crowed, the enemy would have detected, plundered and taken me prisoner too."

As a consequence of this principle, which they applied to both physical and moral evils, the Pharisees taught that we should thank God also for events that seem to us to be evil. (Treatise Berachoth, p. 54.)

I will now relate an instance which is illustrative of the pious character and just reasoning of Rabbi Akiba, and which is also worthy of the close attention of the reader.

There was once a decree of the Roman Emperor, that any one who would study the holy law should be put to death. Notwithstanding this prohibition,

Rabbi Akiba kept preaching publicly on the divine scriptures, undaunted and with incomparable courage.

Papus, the son of Judah, met him just when he was addressing a vast audience. He accosted him thus: "Dear Rabbi, art thou not afraid of being punished by the government?" Rabbi Akiba replied: "Our situation reminds me of a story, which I shall tell you now, from which you may learn a lesson."

## *THE FOX AND THE FISHES.*

"A fox was walking on the brink of a river and observed that there was a great commotion among the fishes therein. They were swimming uneasily to and fro. He asked them, 'Why are you so restless to-day? By whom are you pursued?' They answered, 'We want to escape the perils of nets and hooks which men throw out to catch us.'

"Then said the fox, 'I pity you my dear ones, but I will tell you now what you have to do in order to be rescued. Come to me on dry land, where we will then lead a happy life together.'

"But they said, 'Art thou the same beast that is regarded by all as the wisest among the brutes? Thou seemest not to be wise at all, but a fool. If we are in danger of losing our lives in the water, our natural element of life, how much more dangerous would it be for us to be on dry land, where we could not exist at all!'"

"This," continued Akiba, "is exactly the case with us, in these times of persecution. If trouble and

danger threaten us even when we are studying the holy scriptures, which are the means of a happy existence and the source of a happy life, how much more are we exposed to all kinds of trouble and woe, if we neglect to study our holy books!"

A short time had elapsed since the above interview between the two Rabbis, when both Akiba and Papus were arrested and thrown into a dungeon. Papus, broken-hearted, said to Akiba: "Happy art thou, Akiba! Thou art here for having battled for the cause of our holy religion; but woe to me! I am imprisoned for having spent my time in temporal and vain efforts, and I did not mind the wise hint thou hast given me. Woe to me, that I did not heed thy sound judgment, and did not follow thy noble example!" (Treatise Berachoth, p. 61, b.)

Furthermore, the Pharisees taught: there is no fatalism on earth, but all that happens is so ordained by God, (treatise Chullin, fol. 7, b,) except virtue and piety, which are entirely left to man's free choice.

In reference to this, Rabbi Akiba expresses himself thus: "Everything that is done is foreseen by Providence, although freedom of choice concerning moral actions, is left to man. God judges the world for its own well-being, and the judgment depends on the balance of deeds. Man goes bail with himself for all that he receives and for all that he does; his life is always in the net of retribution that is spread over all men. On the mart of life, the warehouse is open, the merchant (God) crediteth,

the journal is open and the hand recordeth, and whosoever wishes may come and borrow; yet the collectors (death in various forms) are continually going around, and sometimes get paid with the consent of the debtors, and sometimes without it; and the collectors have good authority on which to rest for support, for the Court renders its decision in conformity with truth and justice, and everything is thus arranged in order to prepare for the feast." (Ethics of the Fathers, Chap. 3, § 15–16.)

And although good and evil are entirely left in this sublunary world to man's choice, they taught that he who pursues or endeavors to pursue the path of virtue receives the support of God; whereas the designs of him who chooses the way of wickedness are not fixed from above, but entirely the fruits of his own choice. (Treatise Joma, fol. 38.) These principles are based upon Psalms xxxvii, xxiii and Proverbs xx and xxiii.

As the most ancient talmudical gnomology is contained in פרקי אבות *Pirke Aboth*, (the Chapters of the Fathers,) I will quote here some of these beautiful maxims and sayings.

## ETHICS OF THE FATHERS.

Chap. I.—§ 1. The men of the great Synod laid down three principles: Be careful in giving judgment; train up many disciples, and make a fence for the law. (Meaning [sepes legis] guard laws, precautionary ordinances.)

§ 2. Simon the Just, who was one of the last of

the great Synod, taught: The welfare of the human race in this world is sustained by virtue of three things, viz: the law, divine worship and charity.

§ 3. Antigonus of Socho, who flourished in the third century before the common era, taught: Be not like servants who serve their master with a view of receiving rewards; but like servants who serve their master without the view of being rewarded, and then will you truly be God-fearing.

This sage was probably acquainted with the doctrines of Socrates, (Xenophon's Memorabilia, I, 1, § 2–3, III, 9, § 15,) and therefore he pronounced the above sentence, that doing right even because it is right and without regard to future reward, is worshiping God, is religion.

It is not only historically certain, that in consequence of the invasion of Asia by Alexander the Great, the Grecian language, literature and culture were transplanted to Palestine, but the very name "Antigonus" leads us to suppose that the Chaldaic and Hebrew languages had to yield their places to the Grecian.

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## THE ORIGIN OF SADDUCISM.

The conciseness of the language, however, used by Antigonus in this sentence, caused his disciples Zadok and Baithos to misunderstand its meaning, so that they drew false conclusions from it and

adopted the system of the Stoics then flourishing in Greece.

But as the Bible was and remained the centre and appeal of all their investigations, it was but natural that their new philisophical system produced a new mode of interpreting the sacred books, and with it a new religious sect. Allured probably by Grecian stoicism, some teachers strove to vindicate this system of Antigonus. They remarked; From what motives was this principle advanced, and why has it been upheld by later teachers? Is it to be imagined that a laborer should work the whole day without receiving due reward in the evening? If our fathers had acknowledged a life to come and the resurrection of the dead, they would never have adopted this principle of Antigonus. (Aboth of Rabbi Nathan, Sec. 5.)

By these and similar reflections, they gained many votaries, established a school of their own and assumed, after the names of Zadok and Baithos, the appellations of Sadducees and Baithosians. The former, however, remained preponderant. (Vide Jost's History of the Israelites, [larger work in 12 vols.], Vol. I, p. 66, and Appendix No. 31; Universal History of the Israelites, [smaller work in 2 vols.], Vol. I, p. 519.)

They assumed like the Stoics, two eternal principles of all things, a passive one, (ὕλη Hyle, in Hebrew, *Tohu Wawohu*, תהו ובהו) and an active principle, God; hence their system is the dualistic one. It was for

this reason that they were designated by their opponents as heretics, as we read in the Talmud Horioth, fol. 11: "Who is a Sadducee? Every idolater." (Compare also Talmud Synhedrin, fol. 38, a and b, and Midrash Rabba Genes. Chap. viii.)

Although they regarded the soul as a part of the Deity, they nevertheless held it to be perishable, like every other material being, for they professed the conviction that it was absurd to believe in the existence of immaterial things.

§ 6. Procure thyself a teacher and acquire thyself an associate; and judge all mankind favorably.

§ 7. Keep thyself aloof from an evil neighbor and associate not with the wicked; nor flatter thyself to escape punishment.

§ 8. Consider not thyself when called on to judge in a litigation, as an advocate of either side; and when the parties are before thee to try their cause, presume them both guilty; but when they are gone look upon them both as innocent, provided they submitted to the judicial decree.

§ 9. Cross examine the witnesses and be careful of your inquiries, lest they learn from your own words to utter a falsehood.

§ 10. Love labor, loathe playing the master, and aspire not after dominion.

§ 11. Ye learned men, be cautious of your words, that your disciples may not misconstrue and hence misunderstand them. Etc., etc.

CHAP. II.—§ 2. It is proper to combine the study of the law (erudition) with practical life, because he who occupies himself with both of these, thinks not of sin.

§ 4. Sacrifice thy will for the will of God, that He may sacrifice the will of others for thy will. Etc.

§ 9. If thou art highly learned, do not pride thyself upon it; because for this purpose wast thou created.

It is related, (Aboth of Rabbi Nathan, Chap. xv,) that Rabbi Jochanan, who laid down this principle, lost a hopeful son in the prime of his life. His disciples came to console him and found him in all the dignity of woe. Every one related to him a similar calamity that had happened, but they could, nevertheless, not conquer by the recital of such melancholy facts, the deep emotion of his excessive sorrow and grief. Rabbi Elieser finally approached him very modestly and accosted him: "Rabbi, allow me to tell thee to what thy great loss which thou hast suffered would be comparable. There was a king who gave one of his servants a very costly and precious vessel in keeping. He wished and sighed daily: 'Oh! may I be so happy that I can deliver it undamaged and faultless when demanded of me by the king.' Dear Rabbi, thy son was such an inestimable vessel, full of knowledge, wisdom, piety of disposition and urbanity of manners, and that thou didst return it to the owner in the most perfect state, must render thee now very happy."

"My son," said the mourning Rabbi, "thou hast comforted me; I am perfectly consoled."

§ 15. Let the honor of thy fellow-man be as dear to thee as thy own; do not get easily into passion; repent one day before thy death; and warm thyself by the fire of wise men, but be careful that the heat does not scorch thee, for all their words are words of fire.

Rabbi Elieser, the teacher of these maxims, when asked by his disciples how any man could strictly follow that rule, to repent one day before his death, as no one knows the time of it, answered: "Therefore be ready every day with penitence and good deeds, as though the next day were thy last." (Aboth of Rabbi Nathan, Chap. xv.)

§ 16. Envy, unbridled passion and misanthropy cause the death of man.

Rabbi Joshua, who taught this maxim, distinguished himself by his piety as well as by his wit, so that he became a favorite of the imperial court at Rome; but they sometimes made him the butt of their raillery on account of his ugliness. A princess once asked him: "How does it come that an excellent mind lodges often in an ugly body?"

"Why," he replied, "does your father keep his best wine in earthen jars, and not in vessels of gold and silver?"

The princess ordered at once that vessels of gold and silver should be filled with the best wine; but it soon grew sour. The emperor, who heard the story,

then remarked that he knew many excellent men who were handsome too, but that they would be still more excellent if they were less handsome. (Jalkut Parshath Toldoth.)

I repeat now that which I said in my "Guide for Rational Inquiries into the Biblical Writings," p. 63.

"As Grecian philosophy began with single sentences and proverbs of the so-called Seven Sages, so must we regard the profound maxims and ascetic doctrines of the first teachers, which are contained in the "Ethics of the Fathers," and the "Aboth of Rabbi Nathan," as the beginning and origin of philisophical studies among the Jews."

Many of the Jewish sages have distinguished themselves by erudition as well as by piety. I have selected here a few instances which will acquaint the reader with their true and exalted ideas and views, and which will perhaps at the same time afford some entertainment.

It is remarked in the Mishnah: Why did God create only one man in the beginning?

It was for many reasons: first, That we may learn from this fact, as the earth was once in existence for the benefit and happiness of one human being, the ruin of one pious and honest human soul is equal to the destruction of a whole world, with all its forces, and the preservation of a human soul from perdition is equal to such a meritorious work, as if one had preserved a whole world with all its beautiful creations. Second, That no man shall be bloated

with pride of high pedigree, and that one shall not say to another, "My father was of nobler blood than yours." (Treatise Synhedrin, p. 37, a.)

It is related that a caviling heathen, an acquaintance of Rabbi Gamliel, once said to him: "If your God, as you assert, is the source of all righteousness, please tell me, why did He steal a rib from the first man when asleep, as it is stated in Genesis, Chapter i, 21?"

The amiable and accomplished daughter of Gamliel, who happened to be present, requested her father for the permission to set this infidel to rights. "Well, do so, my dear," answered Gamliel.

She then addressed the heathen and said: "Sir, before arguing our subject, will you have the kindness to do me a favor by calling in a justice of the peace?" "Why," said he, "for what purpose?" She then rejoined: "Some robbers invaded our house last night, purloined a silver goblet and replaced it by a gold one."

"Is that all?" asked the heathen, "I would wish that my house might be pillaged in such a manner every day."

"Well," said she, "since you are of such an opinion, you will probably coincide with me that it was much better for Adam to receive for one rib a beautiful companion for his whole life, who would share his pleasures and woes, and would nourish him faithfully when old and infirm."

"I admit that," said the caviler, "but I would like

to know, why did God make him unconcious when He performed for him the sweetest blessing of his existence?"

She then remarked, "I will answer your question, but before all things, get me a piece of raw meat." He did her bidding with alacrity. She at once took it, washed, salted, dabbed and roasted it in his presence; then she asked him if he would like to have a slice of it; but he politely declined, declaring that he would have had perhaps some appetite, if he had not witnessed the dressing of it.

"Well," she reiterated," exactly so was the case with the first man. If he would have seen how God formed Eve, he might not have liked her so well as when she stood before him, graced with womanly loveliness and beauty." (Treatise Synhedrin, p. 39.)

Rabbi Mair was the first who remonstrated against the blind faith in the authority of eminent men. He enjoined his pupils to use their own intellectual faculties and rely on the result of their own unbiassed criticism.

He laid down the maxim: Look not at the jar but at that which is therein; for there are new jars full of wine, and old jars which do not contain even new wine. (Aboth, Chap. iv, Sec. 27.)

He was also considered the best of the talmudical fable writers. The morals contained in three hundred verses of the Bible he illustrated by fables, but only three have been preserved to us. (Treatise Synhedrin, p. 38, b.)

## *THE FOX AND THE BEAR.*

A fox persuaded a bear to enter the court-yard of a Jewish family on a Friday, late in the afternoon, when they were busy in preparing their meals for the Sabbath, to offer them his services, providing they would allow him to spend the Sabbath with them. But he had hardly entered the premises, when he was welcomed by an armed company who with their sticks assaulted him with such formidable blows, that he had to run for life.

The bear chagrined and growling, rushed towards the fox, intending to tear him to pieces. The fox, however, succeeded in appeasing his wrath by apologising that they mistook him for his father, who had also offered once his help for the preparation of the Sabbath meals, and at the same time unceremoniously helped himself to the best dainties that they had in the house. "What," asked the bear in great astonishment, "shall I suffer the punishment due to my father?"

"Yes," rejoined master fox, "because it is a well-known proverb: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge.' (Ezekiel xviii, 2.) My dear, I will prove my genuine friendship to you forthwith; I know a place where you can eat and drink to your hearts desire."

He then led his snarling companion to a draw-well with two buckets each fastened to the end of a rope attached to a pole laid across the well. He took two stones of equal weight, each of them heavier than himself. He then seated himself in the sus-

pended bucket, taking one of the stones with him, and descended the well while the other bucket slowly ascended. The bear, astonished at the strange freak of his companion, asked him: "Why do you go down?"

The fox reiterated: "Oh, how does this place abound with meat and cheese! Do you not see the luscious cheese?" calling his attention to the reflection of the full moon then shining brightly in the sky. The bear, enticed by the prospect of a good supper, inquired anxiously: "How can I get down."

"Well," said master fox, "place the stone which I have selected in the suspended bucket and then you seat yourself comfortably on it." Advising him to do so, that in case the stupid bear should follow him he would nevertheless be able to ascend by throwing out the stone from his own bucket and then be outbalanced by the other.

The bear, however, unwittingly put the stone in the bucket and seated himself thereon, to the great joy of master fox, who having thrown his stone into the well, was instantly drawn out of his perilous position and jumped from the bucket to dry land.

The bear finding himself deluded, growled: "How am I to get out?" And the fox answered: "The righteous is delivered out of his trouble and the wicked cometh in his stead." (Proverbs, Chap. xi, 8.) And as it reads in the Bible, (Leviticus xix, 36): "Just balances, and just weights," which rule you have grossly violated.

## JUDICIARY OF PALESTINE.

It is stated in Treatise Synhedrin, p. 2, that there were three different courts in the land of Israel.

First, *Synhedrin Gedolah*, supreme court, which was composed of seventy-one members. Second, *Synhedrin Ketanah*, the inferior court, consisting of twenty-three members. Third, *Beth Din*, local court, which consisted of three members.

The qualifications for any one to become a judge of the common court, were intelligence, modesty and popularity. (Treatise Synhedrin, 88 b.) When he practised to the satisfaction of the people, he was promoted to the court at the gate of Har Habayith, (Temple Mountain), from thence to the court at the gate of the *Asarah* (yard), and then he was advanced to the supreme court.

Besides the literary attainments, however, every aspirant to the judicial chair of the supreme court had to be possessed of an exalted, unblemished character, learned in sciences, as in mathematics, medicine and natural philosophy, and well versed in many languages. (Treatise Synhedrin, p. 71.)

The seat of the supreme court was at Jerusalem, in a large hall in the temple called *Lishchath Haggasith*, (the hall of hewn stone), and sometimes in the palace of the High-priest. There were also two inferior courts in Jerusalem; one held its session at

the gate of temple mountain, and the other at the gate of Asarah.

Cases involving capital punishment concerning false prophets, High-priests and a whole tribe, were exclusively cognizable in the supreme court, in the large hall adjoining the temple.

On Friday, Saturday, on the day previous to a biblical festival and on the seven biblical holidays, no court was allowed to hold any session. (Treatise Synhedrin, p. 32, Beza, 36.)

The punishment in capital crimes was performed in four modes: stoning, burning, beheading and strangling. (Treatise Synhedrin, 49, b.) The corpses of those that were stoned to death, were hung by the neck to a gibbet, where they were exhibited until sunset.

The supreme court (*Synhedrin Gedolah*), had two, and according to some, three secretaries to record all the proceedings.

But forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, the supreme court ceased to try any case where capital punishment was inflicted. (Treatise Synhedrin,* p. 41, a.)

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* The word סנהדרין is borrowed from the Greek "συνέδριον" a deliberative assembly or council, and consequently must be pronounced *Synhedrin*, and not *Sanhedrin*; it is feminine gender, and the plural is *Synhedrioth*. (See Treatise Synhedrin, p. 2.)

A translation of the six divisions of the Mishnah was rendered in Latin by Surenhus in the city of Amsterdam, (1698—1703). A Spanish version appeared in Venice in 1606; one in German by Rabe, in Onolzbach in 1761; and another in Berlin, 1832—1834, by the renowned Jewish historian Dr. Jost, the modern Josephus, who added also vowels to the Hebrew text of the Mishnah. In former times the Mishnah was accentuated as stated (Tosefoth on treatise Megillah, p. 32, a,) similar to that of the Hebrew Bible.

Only some single treatises of the Talmud were translated into Latin and German by Drs. Hirschfeld and Pinner; but many talmudical antholigies, with translations and annotations, have been published by Plantavitius, Hurwitz, Fürstenthal, Fürst and others.